NOTICE OF OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET ACTION

Diana Hynek 07/14/2005
Departmental Paperwork Clearance Officer
Office of the Chief Information Officer
14th and Constitution Ave. NW.
Room 6625
Washington, DC 20230

In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act, OMB has taken the following action on your request for approval of a new information collection received on 01/27/2005.

TITLE: Steller Sea Lion Protection Pretest Economic Survey

AGENCY FORM NUMBER(S): None

ACTION : APPROVED WITH CHANGE
OMB NO.: 0648-0511
EXPIRATION DATE: 07/31/2008

BURDEN:	RESPONSES	HOURS	COSTS($,000)
Previous	0	0	0
New	330	143	0
Difference	330	143	0
Program Change		143	0
Adjustment		0	0

TERMS OF CLEARANCE:
All questions with respect to Race and Ethnicity must comply with OMB Standards.

OMB Authorizing Official	Title
Donald R. Arbuckle	Deputy Administrator, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs

PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT SUBMISSION

Please read the instructions before completing this form. For additional forms or assistance in completing this form, contact your agency's Paperwork Clearance Officer. Send two copies of this form, the collection instrument to be reviewed, the supporting statement, and any additional documentation to: Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, Docket Library, Room 10102, 725 17th Street NW, Washington, DC 20503.

1. Agency/Subagency originating request
DOC/NOAA/NMFS

2. OMB control number b. [✔] None
a. _____ - _____

3. Type of information collection (*check one*)
a. [✔] New Collection
b. [ ] Revision of a currently approved collection
c. [ ] Extension of a currently approved collection
d. [ ] Reinstatement, without change, of a previously approved collection for which approval has expired
e. [ ] Reinstatement, with change, of a previously approved collection for which approval has expired
f. [ ] Existing collection in use without an OMB control number
For b-f, note Item A2 of Supporting Statement instructions

4. Type of review requested (*check one*)
a. [✔] Regular submission
b. [ ] Emergency - Approval requested by _____/_____/_____
c. [ ] Delegated

5. Small entities
Will this information collection have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities? [ ] Yes [✔] No

6. Requested expiration date
a. [✔] Three years from approval date b. [ ] Other Specify: _____/_____

7. Title
Steller Sea Lion Protection Pretest Economic Survey

8. Agency form number(s) (*if applicable*) N/A

9. Keywords

10. Abstract

The objective of the pretest is to test a survey instrument that will be used to collect data for measuring the preferences, and economic values, that U.S. residents have for protecting Steller sea lions, a listed species under the Endangered Species Act. These preferences are currently not known, but are needed to improve Steller sea lion management decisions. The pretest consists of conducting a small-scale mail survey of U.S. households that will collect information needed to evaluate the survey instrument and implementation plan.

11. Affected public (*Mark primary with "P" and all others that apply with "x"*)
a. P Individuals or households d. ___ Farms
b. ___ Business or other for-profit e. ___ Federal Government
c. ___ Not-for-profit institutions f. ___ State, Local or Tribal Government

12. Obligation to respond (*check one*)
a. [✔] Voluntary
b. [ ] Required to obtain or retain benefits
c. [ ] Mandatory

13. Annual recordkeeping and reporting burden

a. Number of respondents	330
b. Total annual responses	330
1. Percentage of these responses collected electronically	0 %
c. Total annual hours requested	143
d. Current OMB inventory	0
e. Difference	143
f. Explanation of difference	
1. Program change	143
2. Adjustment	

14. Annual reporting and recordkeeping cost burden *(in thousands of dollars)*

a. Total annualized capital/startup costs	0
b. Total annual costs (O&M)	0
c. Total annualized cost requested	0
d. Current OMB inventory	0
e. Difference	0
f. Explanation of difference	
1. Program change	
2. Adjustment	

15. Purpose of information collection (*Mark primary with "P" and all others that apply with "X"*)
a. ___ Application for benefits e. X Program planning or management
b. ___ Program evaluation f. P Research
c. ___ General purpose statistics g. ___ Regulatory or compliance
d. ___ Audit

16. Frequency of recordkeeping or reporting *(check all that apply)*
a. [ ] Recordkeeping b. [ ] Third party disclosure
c. [✔] Reporting
1. [ ] On occasion 2. [ ] Weekly 3. [ ] Monthly
4. [ ] Quarterly 5. [ ] Semi-annually 6. [ ] Annually
7. [ ] Biennially 8. [✔] Other (describe) one-time

17. Statistical methods
Does this information collection employ statistical methods
[✔] Yes [ ] No

18. Agency Contact (person who can best answer questions regarding the content of this submission)
Name: Dr. Dan Lew
Phone: (206) 526-4252

19. Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions

On behalf of this Federal Agency, I certify that the collection of information encompassed by this request complies with 5 CFR 1320.9

NOTE: The text of 5 CFR 1320.9, and the related provisions of 5 CFR 1320.8(b)(3), appear at the end of the instructions. *The certification is to be made with reference to those regulatory provisions as set forth in the instructions.*

The following is a summary of the topics, regarding the proposed collection of information, that the certification covers:

(a) It is necessary for the proper performance of agency functions;

(b) It avoids unnecessary duplication;

(c) It reduces burden on small entities;

(d) It used plain, coherent, and unambiguous terminology that is understandable to respondents;

(e) Its implementation will be consistent and compatible with current reporting and recordkeeping practices;

(f) It indicates the retention period for recordkeeping requirements;

(g) It informs respondents of the information called for under 5 CFR 1320.8(b)(3):

(i) Why the information is being collected;

(ii) Use of information;

(iii) Burden estimate;

(iv) Nature of response (voluntary, required for a benefit, mandatory);

(v) Nature and extent of confidentiality; and

(vi) Need to display currently valid OMB control number;

(h) It was developed by an office that has planned and allocated resources for the efficient and effective management and use of the information to be collected (see note in Item 19 of instructions);

(i) It uses effective and efficient statistical survey methodology; and

(j) It makes appropriate use of information technology.

If you are unable to certify compliance with any of the provisions, identify the item below and explain the reason in Item 18 of the Supporting Statement.

Signature of Senior Official or designee	Date

Agency Certification (signature of Assistant Administrator, Deputy Assistant Administrator, Line Office Chief Information Officer, head of MB staff for L.O.s, or of the Director of a Program or StaffOffice)	
Signature signed by Rebecca Lent	Date 11/02/2004
Signature of NOAA Clearance Officer	
Signature signed by Eugene C. McDowell	Date 12/30/2004

SUPPORTING STATEMENT
STELLER SEA LION PROTECTION PRETEST ECONOMIC SURVEY

A. Justification

1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary.

Steller sea lions (*Eumetopias jubatus*) live in the North Pacific Ocean and consist of two distinct populations, the Western stock and Eastern stock, which are separated at 144° W longitude. As a result of large declines in the populations since at least the early 1970s, in April 1990 the Steller sea lion (SSL) was listed as threatened throughout its range under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 35). The decline has continued for the Western stock in Alaska, which was declared endangered in 1997, while the Eastern stock remains listed as threatened. Both the Western and Eastern stocks are also listed as depleted under the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) of 1972 (16 U.S.C. 1362). Commercial fishing in Alaska competes for the same fish species SSLs eat and is believed to be an important factor contributing to the continued decline of the Western stock population.

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) is the primary agency responsible for the protection of marine mammals, including Steller sea lions. Multiple management actions have been taken (e.g., 68 FR 204, 68 FR 24615), and are being contemplated, by NMFS to protect and aid the recovery of the SSL populations. These actions differ in the form they take (limits on fishing to increase the stock of fish available for Steller sea lions to eat, area restrictions to minimize disturbances, etc.), which stock is helped, when and how much is done, and their costs. In deciding between these management actions, policy makers must balance the ESA and MMPA goals of protecting Steller sea lions from further declines with providing for sustainable and economically viable fisheries under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation Act (P.L. 94-265). Since Steller sea lion protection is linked to fishery regulations, decision makers must comply with several federal laws and executive orders in addition to the ESA and MMPA, including Executive Order 12866 (58 FR 51735), which requires regulatory agencies to consider costs and benefits in deciding among alternative management actions, including changes to fishery management plans made to protect Steller sea lions.

Public preferences for providing protection to the endangered Western and threatened Eastern stocks of Steller sea lions are primarily the result of the non-consumptive value people attribute to such protection. Little is known about these preferences, yet such information is needed for decision makers to more fully understand the trade-offs involved in choosing between alternatives. How much the public is willing to pay for increased Steller sea lion stock sizes or changes in listing status, as well as preferences for geographic distribution, is information that can aid decision makers to evaluate protection actions and more efficiently manage and protect these resources, but is not currently known. A general population survey is needed that will collect information that provide insights into public values for protection of Steller sea lions and the impacts of that protection.

This information collection is for a pretest that precedes the full survey implementation that is anticipated to be implemented to measure public preferences for Steller sea lion protection. The

pretest will provide researchers with feedback to evaluate the survey instrument. In particular, the pretest will gather a sufficient number of responses to evaluate the information presentation, reliability, internal consistency, response variability, and other properties of a newly developed survey. Results from these activities will be used to make improvements to the survey instrument and survey administration approach. Further development of the survey cannot proceed without the pretest.

2. Explain how, by whom, how frequently, and for what purpose the information will be used. If the information collected will be disseminated to the public or used to support information that will be disseminated to the public, then explain how the collection complies with all applicable Information Quality Guidelines.

The pretest consists of implementing a small-scale mail survey on a sample of U.S. households. We will mail questionnaires to members of the sample; in addition, we will send follow-up mailings to encourage response. Among the follow-up efforts will be a telephone contact with those sample households for whom we have telephone numbers. We will try to obtain some survey information during this telephone follow-up. The survey administration protocols and procedures for assessing non-response behavior are anticipated to be used in the full implementation, so their performance in the pretest will be used to evaluate them.

Mail Questionnaire (Attachment 1)

Two principal types of information will be gathered from the pretest mail survey—responses to survey questions and information about the survey administration. Survey responses gathered from the pretest mail questionnaire include information about the following:

a. Public preferences regarding the protection of the Western stock of Steller sea lions.
b. Public preferences regarding the protection of the Eastern stock of Steller sea lions.
c. The factors that affect the public's preferences for protecting Steller sea lions, such as the geographic distribution of the two stocks, listing status and population size of the two stocks, and protection costs.
d. Information on general attitudes toward protecting threatened and endangered species.

Stated preference response data collected through the pretest will be used by NMFS to gauge the feasibility of the set of attributes and attribute levels being considered and to aid in developing the experimental design for the final survey implementation. In the full implementation, these data will be used by NMFS to estimate a preference function for explaining choices between protection programs that differ in the levels of population sizes, ESA listing status, geographic distribution, and costs. This estimated function will provide NMFS and the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council (NPFMC) with information on public preferences and values for alternative Steller sea lion protection programs, and what factors affect these values. This information can then be compared with program costs and other impacts when evaluating protection alternatives. Although the small sample size in the pretest will preclude statistically robust results for this purpose, preliminary analysis of the pretest data will provide results

sufficient to aid in the experimental design and determine the feasibility of the set of attributes and attribute levels being considered.

The pretest will also provide information about the survey implementation, particularly indicators of response rates to the survey as a whole and to individual questions and factors affecting response behavior. The survey administration protocols will include contacting non-responding individuals via telephone, encouraging them to respond, and if they refuse, asking a set of questions to assist in determining whether there are differences between respondents and non-respondents. These processes are described in more detail in Part B. The pretest affords the only opportunity to test the telephone scripts and determine cooperation rates for the telephone follow-up efforts. Additionally, since this is a new survey instrument involving a public good with low salience for the public at large, overall response rates from the pretest are needed to determine the size of the initial sample to contact for the full implementation that will ensure a sufficiently large number of completed surveys for analysis.

The following is a discussion of how particular questions in the mail questionnaire will be ultimately used. Generally, the survey asks respondents for information regarding their knowledge and opinions of Steller sea lions, other endangered species, other seals and sea lions, Alaska commercial fisheries, and potential goals and impacts of management options available to protect the endangered population of Steller sea lions, in addition to standard socio-demographic information needed to classify respondents. It is divided into eight sections.

<u>Section 1: The Issue: Threatened and Endangered Steller Sea Lions</u>

The first section identifies the Steller sea lion as a species protected under the Endangered Species Act and presents information about the Endangered Species Act (ESA), including definitions for "endangered" and "threatened" species, which are important to the policy questions in the survey. The introductory material also presents a breakdown of how many species are protected under the ESA to help place Steller sea lions in context as one of many ESA-protected species. Finally, the introduction identifies that the ESA requires reasonable actions be taken, which begins to motivate the questions about alternative actions to consider. The section also lists reasons people may care about threatened and endangered species and the types of costs that result from protecting them.

- Q1 asks how positive or negative the respondent's reaction is when they think about the Endangered Species Act. This simple question identifies people's general feelings toward endangered species protection. It provides an easy start to the process of thinking about threatened and endangered species, and it sets a tone of neutrality by allowing positive and negative reactions right from the start. In initial testing, responses to this question were good predictors of how respondents would answer the stated preference questions.

- To put the issue of protecting threatened and endangered species in the context that there are many social issues (each with costs), and thus to reduce survey "importance bias", Q2 asks the respondent whether less, about the same, or more should be done with respect to several other issues facing the U.S. In addition to protection of threatened and

endangered species, the set of issues listed includes government efficiency, education, road and highway improvements, economic growth and jobs, and air and water pollution.

- After providing some general reasons for and against protecting threatened and endangered species (again providing a neutral perspective), Q3 addresses the importance to the respondent of general protection of threatened and endangered species, and whether protecting jobs is more or less important than threatened and endangered species protection to the respondent. Responses to this question were also found to be correlated with response patterns to stated choice questions in initial testing.

Section 2: Seals and Sea Lions in the U.S.

To properly value Steller sea lions, it is vital to accurately define the good and to provide the context within which it exists to ensure that respondents fully understand what they are to value. Part of the process of providing context for the valuation involves discussing the species that may serve as substitutes in individual's minds for Steller sea lions. In focus groups, a natural set of substitutes that people identified for Steller sea lions is other seals and sea lions that exist near where Steller sea lions live.

This section provides some facts about seals and sea lions in the U.S., pictures and facts about the species that reside along the Pacific Coast and in Hawaii. It also illustrates that some species have recovered after protection actions were taken, demonstrating that such actions can work, and that the Steller sea lion is one of three seal and sea lion species that are protected by the ESA.

- Q4 is used to determine whether respondents had prior experience with seals or sea lions, and aids in encouraging respondents to review the information provided.

Section 3: Some Steller Sea Lion Facts

This brief section introduces several facts about Steller sea lions. This information sets the stage for the Steller sea lion versus fishing conflicts, as Steller sea lions are large and eat a lot, don't migrate (and thus one population will not replace the other), and serve an uncertain role in the ecosystem.

- Like Q4, Q5 is intended to get respondents to begin thinking about Steller sea lions and determine whether they are familiar with Steller sea lions prior to the survey.

Section 4: The Western and Eastern Stocks of Steller Sea Lions

This section describes why Steller sea lions are divided into the Western and Eastern stocks, provides a map identifying where the stocks are located, presents a graphic that illustrates the population trends of each stock in the past and into the future if current trends continue, and identifies what has been done to protect Steller sea lions in the past and current ESA listing and population trend. This and the next section define the baseline of current and expected future

conditions with current management programs, which is required for proper valuation of alternative levels of protection.

- Q6, which asks whether the respondent has ever lived in or visited areas where the Western stock lives, is intended to get the individual to review the map that indicates where the Western and Eastern stocks are and relate the map to their own experiences.

- Respondents are asked how concerned they are about each stock in Q7. This information serves dual purposes. First, it encourages the respondent to read and understand what is occurring with each stock, and second, provides information that can be used to check for consistency of preferences with responses to stated preference questions.

Section 5: Steller Sea Lions and Commercial Fishing

In this section, the link between commercial fishing and Steller sea lions is explained, and the fishery management actions that make up the *status quo* protection measures are introduced.

- Q8 asks respondents to indicate how concerned they are about two impacts of protecting Steller sea lions, lost commercial fishing jobs and higher fish prices. This question is important because it familiarizes the respondent with the costs of protecting Steller sea lions to the fishing industry and to households, thus setting up the payment vehicle in the stated preference questions. Like Q7, this question can be used to assess internal preference consistency with responses to stated preference questions. Together with Q9, the question serves the purpose of acknowledging that there are costs to protecting Steller sea lions and informing the respondent about these costs. This is important for maintaining a neutral stance regarding protection and minimizing information bias, particularly in light of the fact that several people in earlier testing did not feel that protecting Steller sea lions was important.

Section 6: Additional Steller Sea Lion Protection

This section introduces the idea that more can be done to protect the Western stock, introduces the payment vehicle, and sets the stage for asking about specific protection alternatives in the stated preference questions.

- Q9 provides information about the validity of the payment vehicle to the individual and can help explain certain responses to the stated preference questions. Respondents are asked to indicate the degree to which they agree or disagree with two statements. The first states that more should be done to prevent the Western stock from going extinct even if it costs more money, while the second states that as long as the Eastern stock recovers, it doesn't matter if the Western stock goes extinct. Agreeing with the first statement indicates a willingness to spend money to protect the Western stock of Steller sea lions. Disagreeing with it suggests individuals may not choose costly programs to help the species. Agreeing with the second statement explains why some people may not wish to

spend additional money to protect the Western stock. Disagreement with the second statement suggests a concern for the Western stock independent of what happens to the Eastern stock.

- Protection efforts will not be equally effective everywhere. Protecting Steller sea lions in some areas is much more costly than in other areas. Thus, it is important to understand public preferences for where protection efforts should be focused. Q10 gathers preferences about alternative strategies for protecting areas where Steller sea lions will live and sets up an attribute of the protection alternatives asked about in the stated preference questions.

Section 7: What Alternatives Do You Prefer?

This section contains the stated preference questions, which are in a choice experiment, or stated choice, framework. The section begins with instructions for answering the questions and a budget reminder. It is followed by the three stated choice questions (Q11, Q13, Q14), an open-ended comment question (Q12), and follow-up questions (Q15, Q16). The information from these questions will be used to estimate a Steller sea lion protection preference function.

- In each of the three choice questions (Q11, Q13, and Q14), respondents are confronted with three alternatives that differ in what they do and how much they cost, the current Steller sea lion protection program (Alternative A), which is the status quo alternative, and two others that do more and cost more (Alternatives B and C). These alternatives are described by their expected results with respect to the following attributes:

  1. Western stock ESA listing status
  2. Western stock total population size
  3. Areas where the Western stock will live
  4. Eastern stock ESA listing status
  5. Eastern stock total population size
  6. Added household cost[1]

  Respondents are then asked to choose the alternative they most prefer, and which they least prefer. The status quo is always the first option to make it easy for respondents to select it (and reduce any unintended bias in selecting alternatives to do more and spend more), and to allow rank ordering of alternatives B and C relative to the baseline (Alternative A), which provides statistical efficiency gains over paired choices.

- Q12 provides respondents space to comment on their answers to Q11. It can provide insights into the individual's thought process used in answering Q11, and subsequently help identify valid and invalid responses. Second, it provides the opportunity for individuals to express how they feel about being asked this type of question. This is

[1] In cognitive interviews, individuals were specifically asked in what form they believed they would be paying for Steller sea lion protection programs. The vast majority responded that the added cost in the choice questions simply represents money out of their pocket, mostly in the form of federal taxes, but also from some additional expenditures on seafood products.

especially important for those that clearly dislike some element of the question. This comment question is not repeated for other choice questions because experience indicates little additional information is gained from repeating the question.

- In Q15, respondents are asked to agree or disagree with several statements that are used to help address several concerns about people's responses, including whether respondents feel it is their responsibility to pay for Steller sea lion protection at all (potential protest), whether respondents had enough information to make an informed choice (the effect of uncertainty on values), whether respondents were paying just for Steller sea lions or if they believed other species were being protected by the alternatives considered (potential embedding), whether respondents believed the federal government could effectively manage the Steller sea lion protection programs to bring about the results being valued (potential protest), and whether respondents feel they should not have to pay more federal taxes for any reason (potential protest).

- Q16 identifies how confident individuals are about their answers to the stated preference questions. Respondents stating they are "not at all confident" in their answers may be excluded from the estimation since these individuals, for whatever reason, are uncertain that their answers reflect how they feel.

Section 8: About You and Your Household

This final section consists of eleven questions, H1 – H11, that collect information about the respondent and the respondent's household to be used as explanatory variables in the stated preference model, for comparing the sample to the population (coverage or sampling bias), and for comparing respondents to non-respondents (non-response bias). To the extent possible, the questions and response categories parallel those used by the Census Bureau to allow the most direct comparisons.

- Socioeconomic and demographic information collected includes gender (H1), age (H2), household size (H3), employment status (H4), education (H6), household ownership status (H7), ethnicity (H9), race (H10), and income (H11).

- Respondents are also asked if they, or any family members, have been employed in the commercial fishing industry (H5) to identify individuals who may view protecting Steller sea lions as a public bad instead of a public good.

- The number of listed telephone numbers in the household is asked for in H8. This information is useful for understanding the probability that the household was chosen for the sample.

Telephone Follow-Up (Attachment 2)

Following the initial mailing and postcard reminder, we will contact non-respondents by telephone to encourage them to complete the mail survey[2] and to collect limited information from those who decide not to participate in the mail survey at all.[3] The information provided by these non-respondents can be compared with that from respondents to address issues concerning non-response bias. Selected socioeconomic and demographic questions, along with a few key attitudinal questions, are asked to statistically test whether non-respondents differ from respondents with respect to these characteristics. The attitudinal questions include versions of Q1 and Q3 from the mail questionnaire. Responses to questions like these have been shown to be correlated to responses to stated preference questions in earlier rounds of focus groups and cognitive interviews. This information can be used to evaluate and adjust the results for potential non-response bias among sample members.

3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

The pretest survey will not utilize any specialized information technology.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.

The economics literature was consulted extensively to identify studies that valued Steller sea lions. To date, there has only been one effort, aside from the proposed data collection, to provide economic value information for Steller sea lions. During the summer and fall of 2000, a contingent valuation-based Steller sea lion survey was conducted by the University of Alaska at Fairbanks (UAF). The study's results are reported in Turcin (2001), Giraud, Turcin, Loomis, and Cooper (2002), and Turcin and Giraud (2003). There are several deficiencies in the survey instrument that mitigates the usefulness of the estimated welfare estimates for Steller sea lion protection. Four of the main shortcomings of the survey are the following:

1. The survey instrument does not reflect a state-of-the-art design. It uses small font sizes, employs large and complicated text passages, and has numerous typos that may cause respondents to skip important information or lose interest.
2. The information presentation is confusing and potentially biasing. The distinction between all (both western and eastern populations of) Steller sea lions and the western stock of Steller sea lions is blurred, as the terms "western population" and "Steller sea lion" are used interchangeably. Additionally, the threatened status of the Eastern stock, and the Eastern stock generally, is not mentioned despite the potential substitution relationship between the populations. This brings into question the proper interpretation of the estimated economic value (whether the values are significantly biased upward, as our focus groups and cognitive interviews suggest).

[2] Those needing a replacement survey will be mailed one following the telephone interview.
[3] In the telephone follow-up, a limited amount of information may also be collected from those agreeing to return the mail survey.

3. Substitution reminders are not provided. In particular, Steller sea lion population trends are not put into context with respect to other species, which may be problematic if people view other marine mammal species as substitutes for the Steller sea lion. The absence of this contextual background brings into question the validity of responses to the valuation question.
4. The public good being valued is the added protection from a single "Expanded Federal Steller Sea Lion Recovery Program" that would result in the recovery of the Western stock to some unspecified population level, in some unspecified locations, at some unspecified time period (and without consideration to the concurrent status of the Eastern stock). Because the protection program results are imprecisely defined, and do not consider many of the policy attributes of real concern (such as the Eastern stock status, and alternative Western stock listing status targets such as threatened, population size, and locations), the resulting welfare estimate is difficult to interpret and has limited usefulness for policy purposes.

Although there is only one existing survey effort to understand the value of Steller sea lions, there are numerous examples of studies conducted to estimate the non-consumptive use value of other endangered species and marine mammals. Examples include Bosetti and Pearce (2003), Langford, et al. (2001), Jakobsson and Dragun (2001), Fredman (1995), Hagen, et al. (1992), among others. All these studies utilized contingent valuation methods. As a result, they are unable to fully analyze marginal values of attributes of the species protection. The proposed study departs from those in the existing literature in its use of a stated choice framework that allows marginal values of attributes of protection programs to be estimated.[4] This added information should provide decision makers with better information about how much the public would benefit from programs that lead to differing results, and thus represents a flexible tool for management.

5. If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small identities, describe any methods used to minimize burden.

The collection does not involve small businesses or other small identities.

6. Describe the consequence to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently.

The pretest is necessary to assess whether the survey administration protocols and materials are adequate for implementing the full survey that will gather data for estimating public values for protecting Steller sea lions. Without the pretest, there will be insufficient responses to develop a reliable experimental design and to evaluate the information presentation, reliability, internal consistency, response variability, and other properties of the survey. This is a critical step needed to be confident that the questionnaire is functioning in the way in which it is intended and can be successfully implemented and to evaluate the efficacy of the survey implementation methods.

[4] For an additional literature review, see Attachment 4.

If the pretest collection (and hence full collection) is not conducted, the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC) and NMFS will have to rely on the 2000 UAF survey for information on public values for Steller sea lion protection to consider along with other important information in decisions about Steller sea lion management alternatives. As noted above, this survey has several major deficiencies that bring into question the accuracy and utility of the results. Importantly, the UAF results have limited application for incorporating public preferences and values concerning marginal trade-offs between management alternatives since the estimated public value is associated with a single management alternative.

7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with OMB guidelines.

The collection is consistent with OMB guidelines.

8. Provide a copy of the PRA Federal Register notice that solicited public comments on the information collection prior to this submission. Summarize the public comments received in response to that notice and describe the actions taken by the agency in response to those comments. Describe the efforts to consult with persons outside the agency to obtain their views on the availability of data, frequency of collection, the clarity of instructions and recordkeeping, disclosure, or reporting format (if any), and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported.

A Federal Register notice (see Attached) solicited comments on the information collection. No comments were received.

The survey instrument and implementation plan have benefited from input and guidance from numerous individuals outside the Agency. Dr. David Layton, Associate Professor of Public Affairs, University of Washington, and Dr. Robert Rowe, President of Stratus Consulting, Inc., a leading economics consulting firm, have been principal participants in the design and testing of the survey instrument. Both have extensive experience in designing and testing economic surveys of non-market goods. Dr. Roger Tourangeau, Senior Research Scientist at the Survey Research Center of University of Michigan and Director of the Joint Program in Survey Methodology at the University of Maryland, has reviewed elements of the survey instrument and provided guidance on survey administration. Dr. Gardner Brown, Professor Emeritus of Economics, University of Washington has provided input on the survey instrument design and content, and participated in some pretesting activities. Dr. Richard Bishop, Professor of Agricultural and Applied Economics at the University of Wisconsin, and Dr. Vic Adamowicz, Professor of Rural Economy at the University of Alberta, have reviewed and commented on the survey design and stated preference questions. Dr. David Chapman of Stratus Consulting has contributed to the design of the survey instrument through his involvement moderating focus groups and conducting cognitive interviews to test the survey instrument.

In addition, the pretest survey instrument presents the latest information on Steller sea lions, current population trends, alternative management options, and likely impacts of management options. To ensure that the information is as accurate as possible, numerous Steller sea lion researchers and biologists have reviewed the survey instrument, including Drs. Tom Loughlin, Libby Logerwell, and Doug DeMaster, and Mr. Lowell Fritz of NMFS, and Dr. Tim Ragen, Scientific Program Director at the Marine Mammal Commission.

9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.

To encourage participation in the mail survey, an honorarium of $5 will be given to half the participants in the initial mailing, while the other half will receive $2. This will allow testing for incentive effects on response rates. If the larger incentive is shown to increase response rate, it will be used in the full implementation (to be conducted under a subsequent information collection).

Inclusion of an incentive acts as a sign of goodwill on the part of the study sponsors and encourages reciprocity of that goodwill by the respondent. Singer (2002) provides a comprehensive review of the use of incentives in surveys. She notes that giving respondents a small financial incentive (even a token amount) in the first mailing increases response rates in mail-based surveys and are cost-effective. Such prepaid incentives are more effective than larger promised incentives that are contingent on completion of the questionnaire. In tests conducted by Lesser, et al. (1999), including a $2 incentive in a mailing with four contact points was shown to increase response rates by an additional 19 to 31 percentage points. Thus, even a small upfront incentive typically is more cost effective than additional follow-up steps that are often considered. Based on the literature, we expect the larger $5 incentive will boost response rates relative to the $2 incentive, but the cost-effectiveness of the $5 incentive will be evaluated in the pretest.

There are several reasons why we believe inclusion of both a financial incentive and follow-up contacts will be needed to reach desired response rates. First, the survey is about an unfamiliar issue to many Americans. As such, the chance that respondents will not be motivated to complete the survey is higher than for a survey on a more familiar subject (such as a survey of licensed anglers about managing local fishing sites). Second, although every attempt is being made to ensure the survey is easy to read, understand, and complete, the amount of information it needs to present and the number of questions it needs to ask contribute to a 16 page survey requiring more respondent attention than some surveys. For these reasons, we expect both incentives and follow-up contacts will be required to obtain a suitable response rate and to evaluate potential non-response biases.

10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy.

In the cover letter accompanying each mailing, respondents will be told that their responses are voluntary and will be kept strictly confidential and material related to their identity will be destroyed upon the conclusion of the study. The cover page of the survey will also include the following Privacy Act Statement:

> Your participation in this survey is voluntary. All responses are confidential and any material identifying you will be destroyed at the end of the study.

The survey will conform to the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C. 552a). The plan for maintaining confidentiality includes the deletion of names and other identifying information in any data file delivered to NMFS or any other participating researchers and agencies.

11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private.

There are no questions of a sensitive nature asked in the survey.

12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information.

The pretest mail survey will be sent to a random sample of approximately 424 addresses. The random sample will be purchased from a professional sampling vendor.[5] Based on previous experience, up to 15% of these types of samples can be expected to be bad or unusable addresses, which means the number of households receiving the survey will be approximately 360. We expect a final response rate of at least 60 percent (of the valid sample), leading to over 216 responding households returning completed surveys (for the purpose of computing burden hours, we assume no more than 240, 144 completed from the initial mailing and postcard reminder and 96 completed following contact via phone). The cover letter will solicit the participation of an adult head of the household to complete the survey. While our experience has been that respondents typically complete the survey in 20 to 25 minutes, we assume 30 minutes to conservatively compute the potential burden hours. As a result, those ultimately completing the survey are expected to contribute up to 120 hours to the overall hour burden.

Following the initial mailing and postcard, we expect approximately 40% or 144 households to have returned completed surveys. Households that have not responded after the initial mailing and postcard reminder will be contacted by telephone and encouraged to complete and return the survey or asked to answer a few questions if they indicate they will not be returning the survey. Thus, the telephone follow-up serves the dual purpose of increasing the number of mail

[5] For the purpose of the pretest, the variations in samples from different vendors will have little influence on the results with respect to the objectives of the pretest. During the review and pretest period, additional data will be collected to evaluate vendors for the final survey. Candidate vendors for the pretest and final survey include Acxiom, Experian, Survey Sampling Int'l, and Genesys, all of whom are high quality vendors with high population coverage rates (85% to 95%), but which vary in the methods used to assemble lists and in the percent of their population with telephone numbers.

responses and gathering information by telephone needed to estimate the impact of non-response. Households that need a replacement questionnaire will be identified and sent a new one. The phone interview is expected to take 6 minutes on average to complete, and we expect to attempt to reach and complete interviews with up to 42% of the 360 potential respondents, or up to 150 individuals, for a total of 15 hours.[6]

If overall response rates are lower than desired after the phone interview, an additional phone contact may be tried with those households that have still not responded. This includes households that had been contacted in the previous phone follow-up and had indicated a willingness to participate in the survey, and other sample households that previously could not be successfully contacted. This contact would be identical in content to the previous phone interview and is expected to be conducted with up to 75 individuals. At six minutes apiece, the 75 additional phone interviews will total 7.5 hours. Alternatively, a second full mailing may be attempted, perhaps by certified mail. This would not result in any additional burden hours.

The total number of unique respondents to all survey contacts will be 330, including those who complete only the short telephone interview. This number consists of respondents who return the questionnaire and respondents who do not return the questionnaire but do provide some survey information during the telephone contact. This assumes that 8.3% of the sample, or 30 households, will be unreachable in the phone contacts and will not return a completed survey.

Survey instrument	Estimated number of respondents	Estimated time per respondent (minutes)	Estimated total annual burden hours (hours)
Mail survey (from initial mailing and postcard reminder)	144	30	72
Mail survey (from phone contacts)	96	30	48
Follow-up phone survey	150[a]	6	15
Optional follow-up phone survey	75[b]	6	7.5
Total respondents	330[c]		142.5

[a] Number of successful phone contacts of households that have not returned completed surveys following initial mailing and postcard reminder.

[b] Includes some households who had already been contacted in initial follow-up phone interview, as well as households that could not be successfully contacted before.

[c] Total respondents reflect the total sample size minus the households that do not complete the mail survey or either phone interview.

[6] Although we will attempt to reach all households in the sample that have not returned a completed survey to this point, we do not expect to be able to reach more than 150 in a timely and affordable manner.

13. Provide an estimate for the total annual cost burden to respondents or recordkeepers resulting from the collection of information.

No additional cost burden will be imposed on respondents aside from the burden hours indicated above.

14. Provide estimates of annualized costs to the Federal government.

Annual cost to the Federal government of the pretest is approximately $50,000 divided as follows: $45,000 in contract award money and $5,000 in staff time and resources. Contractor services include conducting the pretest implementation and evaluation.

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported in Items 13 or 14 of the OMB Form 83-I.

This is a new collection, and is thus a program change. Reasons for this collection were outlined in Items 1 and 2.

16. For collections of information whose results will be published, outline plans for tabulation and publication.

Internal memoranda and supporting materials will be prepared that document the sampling procedures and response rates, provides statistical summaries (i.e., means, variances, and frequency distributions) of data collected in the survey, and preliminary analysis that will be used to aid in the design of the final experimental design and in improving the survey design. These materials will not be published.

17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons why display would be inappropriate.

This item is not applicable, as the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection will be shown on the survey.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in Item 19 of the OMB Form 83-I.

There are no exceptions to Item 19 of the OMB Form 83-I.

B. Collections of Information Employing Statistical Methods

1. **Describe (including a numerical estimate) the potential respondent universe and any sampling or other respondent selection method to be used. Data on the number of entities (e.g. establishments, State and local governmental units, households, or persons) in the universe and the corresponding sample are to be provided in tabular form. The tabulation must also include expected response rates for the collection as a whole. If the collection has been conducted before, provide the actual response rate achieved.**

The potential respondent universe is all U.S. households (approximately 106 million according to the 2000 Census). A stratified random sample of approximately 60 Alaska households and 300 non-Alaska U.S. households will be used in the pretest. Alaskan households are oversampled to ensure the inclusion of their preferences, since they are potentially more directly affected by actions to protect Steller sea lions and are likely to have more familiarity with Steller sea lions. The non-Alaska U.S. household sample is larger, recognizing the importance of sample size considerations for the ultimate goal of generating reliable national estimates.

For the collection as a whole, a response rate in excess of 60% is anticipated. This estimate is based on similar stated preference surveys conducted by PA Consulting implemented using similar approaches.

2. **Describe the procedures for the collection, including: the statistical methodology for stratification and sample selection; the estimation procedure; the degree of accuracy needed for the purpose described in the justification; any unusual problems requiring specialized sampling procedures; and any use of periodic (less frequent than annual) data collection cycles to reduce burden.**

The pretest will use a stratified random sample of approximately 424 households purchased from a professional sampling vendor (see footnote 4). The population is stratified into Alaska and non-Alaska households with the Alaska household stratum consisting of approximately 71 households and the non-Alaska stratum consisting of approximately 353 households. The advance letter and cover letter accompanying the initial mailing will solicit the participation of a male or female head of household to complete the survey.

For each strata, a sample of households will be purchased. Up to 15% of the purchased sample may be invalid, leading to valid samples of 60 and 300, respectively, for the two strata.

As noted earlier, survey responses will be used to evaluate the feasibility of the set of attributes and attribute levels. To this end, a preliminary valuation model will be estimated using a simple, random utility-based multinomial choice model to assess the statistical significance of the set of attributes used, and provide starting values for the full survey implementation. Given the expected response rates, the sample sizes described above should be sufficiently large for simple modeling, and for basic data analysis. Summary statistics (means, medians, standard deviations, minimums, and maximums) will be calculated for responses to questions.

3. Describe the methods used to maximize response rates and to deal with nonresponse. The accuracy and reliability of the information collected must be shown to be adequate for the intended uses. For collections based on sampling, a special justification must be provided if they will not yield "reliable" data that can be generalized to the universe studied.

Numerous steps have been, and will be, taken to maximize response rates and deal with non-response behavior. These efforts are described below.

Maximizing Response Rates

The first step in achieving a high response rate is to develop an appealing questionnaire that is easy for respondents to complete. Significant effort has been spent on developing a good survey instrument. Experts on economic survey design and stated preference techniques were hired to assist in the design and testing of the survey. The current survey instrument has also benefited from input on earlier versions from several focus groups and one-on-one interviews (verbal protocols and cognitive interviews), and peer review by experts in survey design and non-market valuation, and by scientists who study Steller sea lions, other marine mammals, and fisheries. In the focus groups and interviews, the information presented was tested to ensure key concepts and terms were understood, figures and graphics (color and black and white) were tested for proper comprehension and appearance, and key economic and design issues were evaluated. In addition, cognitive interviews were used to ensure the survey instrument was not too technical, used words people could understand, and was a comfortable length and easy to complete. The result is a high-quality and professional-looking survey instrument.

The implementation techniques that will be employed are consistent with methods that maximize response rates. Implementation of the mail survey will follow the Dillman Tailored Design Method (2000), which consists of multiple contacts. The specific set of contacts that will be employed is the following (see Attachment 3):

1. An **advance letter** notifying respondents a few days prior to the questionnaire arriving. This will be the first contact for households in the sample.
2. An **initial mailing** sent a few days after the advance letter. Each mailing will contain a personalized cover letter, questionnaire, and a pre-addressed stamped return envelope. The initial mailing will also include a small incentive, $2 for half of the sample and $5 for the other half.
3. A **postcard follow-up reminder** to be mailed 5-7 days following the initial mailing.
4. **A follow-up phone call** to encourage response. Individuals needing an additional copy of the survey will be sent one with another cover letter and return envelope.

In the event of lower-than-expected response rates after the follow-up phone call, another contact may be tried to increase response rate. This additional contact may take the form of a certified mailing or a second follow-up phone interview of individuals who we were unable to contact in the first phone interview.

An honorarium of either $2 or $5 will be provided to respondents for participating in the mail survey. In the pretest, half the sample will receive $2, while the other half will receive $5. If response rates are significantly higher for the $5 group, it is expected that the entire sample will receive the honorarium in the full implementation of the survey. The effectiveness of the larger honorarium to boost response rates is a key element of the pretest.

Non-respondents

To better understand why non-respondents did not return the survey and to determine if there are systematic differences between respondents and non-respondents, those contacted in follow-up phone call(s) and identified as non-respondents will be asked a few questions to gauge their reasons for not responding to the mail survey. These include select socioeconomic and demographic classification questions and a few attitudinal questions. Information collected from non-respondents will aid in improving the survey implementation and to correct for non-response bias where necessary (e.g., Heckman method).

In the final survey implementation we anticipate additional steps to further address potential combined coverage and non-response bias, but this is not a key component of the pretest given that small sample sizes will limit the effectiveness of such exercises. Additional steps anticipated in the final survey include comparing respondent socio-demographic characteristics to the population (U.S. and Alaska) based on the Current Population Statistics, and adding a few environmental attitudinal questions at the end of the survey that match established surveys.

4. Describe any tests of procedures or methods to be undertaken. Tests are encouraged as effective means to refine collections, but if ten or more test respondents are involved OMB must give prior approval.

Several focus groups with fewer than ten members of the general public were conducted during the survey design phase to test concepts and presentation of elements of the survey. These focus groups were conducted in Seattle and Denver. The survey instrument was then further evaluated and revised using input from one-on-one interviews conducted in Anchorage, Denver, Sacramento, and Rockville (Maryland). Both verbal protocol (talk aloud) and self-administered interviews were conducted, both with follow-up debriefing by team members. Moreover, the survey design and implementation plan have benefited from reviews conducted by academics with expertise in economic survey design and implementation.

5. Provide the name and telephone number of individuals consulted on the statistical aspects of the design, and the name of the agency unit, contractor(s), grantee(s), or other person(s) who will actually collect and/or analyze the information for the agency.

Several individuals were consulted on the statistical aspects of the design:

Dr. David Layton
Associate Professor of Public Affairs

University of Washington
(206) 324-1885

Dr. Robert Rowe
President
Stratus Consulting, Inc.
(303) 381-8000

Dr. Roger Tourangeau
Director, Joint Program in Survey Methodology
University of Maryland and
Senior Research Scientist, Survey Research Center
University of Michigan

Dr. Dan Lew
Economist
NOAA Fisheries
(206) 526-4252

Drs. David Layton, Robert Rowe, and Dan Lew will be involved in the analysis of the pretest data.

The contractor who will collect the data is

Pam Rathbun
PA Consulting
(608) 827-7820

References:

Bosetti, V. and Pearce, D. (2003) "A study of environmental conflict: the economic value of Grey Seals in southwest England." *Biodiversity and Conservation*. 12: 2361-2392.

Dillman, D.A. (2000) *Mail and Internet Surveys: The Tailored Design Method.* New York: John Wiley & Sons.

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Giraud, K., Turcin, B., Loomis, J., and Cooper, J. (2002). "Economic benefits of the protection program for the Steller sea lion." *Marine Policy*. 26(6): 451-458.

Hagen, D., Vincent, J., and Welle, P. (1992) "Benefits of preserving old-growth forests and the spotted owl." *Contemporary Policy Issues*. 10: 13-25. (1992),

Jakobsson, K.M. and Dragun, A.K. (2001) "The worth of a possum: valuing species with the contingent valuation method." *Environmental and Resource Economics.* 19: 211-227.

Langford, I.H., Skourtos, M.S., Kontogianni, A., Day, R.J., Georgiou, S., and Bateman, I.J. (2001) "Use and nonuse values for conserving endangered species: the case of the Mediterranean monk seal." *Environment and Planning A.* 33: 2219-2233.

Lesser, V., Dillman, D.A., Lorenz, F.O., Carlson, J., and Brown, T.L. (1999). "The influence of financial incentives on mail questionnaire response rates." Paper presented at the meeting of the Rural Sociological Society, Portland, OR.

Singer E. 2002. "The use of incentives to reduce nonresponse in household surveys.: In *Survey Nonresponse*, ed. R Groves, D Dillman, J Eltinge, R Little, pp. 163-78. New York: John Wiley & Sons

Turcin, B. (2001) "Dichotomous choice contingent valuation willingness to pay estimates across geographically nested samples: case study of Alaskan Steller sea lion." Master's thesis, University of Alaska, Fairbanks.

Turcin, B. and Giraud, K. (2003) "Motivations in willingness to pay estimates across geographically nested samples: case study of Alaskan Steller sea lion." Working paper, Department of Resource Economics and Development, University of New Hampshire.

ATTACHMENT 1

The Future of Steller Sea Lions
What is Your Opinion?

Your participation in this survey is voluntary. All responses are confidential and any material identifying you will be destroyed at the end of the study.

This survey is funded by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, a U.S. government agency charged with making decisions about Steller sea lion management activities.

The material in this survey is based on the best available information from government, university and industry scientists.

Notwithstanding any other provision of the law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall any person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with, a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act, unless that collection of information displays a currently valid OMB Control Number.

OMB Control #_____
Expiration Date_____

The Issue: Threatened and Endangered Steller Sea Lions

The Steller sea lion is protected as a threatened and endangered species under the U.S. Endangered Species Act. According to the act:

> An endangered species is a plant or animal species that is in danger of going extinct in the areas where it normally lives.
>
> A threatened species is a species that is at risk of becoming endangered in the areas where it normally lives.

There currently are 74 mammals, 92 birds, 115 fish, 236 other species such as reptiles and insects, and 746 plants listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act.

The Endangered Species Act requires the federal government to take reasonable actions to protect threatened and endangered species, such as banning hunting or protecting the places where they live.

Q1 **When you think of the Endangered Species Act, how positive or negative is your general reaction?** *Circle the number of the best answer.*

1 Mostly positive
2 Somewhat positive
3 Neutral
4 Somewhat negative
5 Mostly negative
9 Don't know

Q2 **Protecting threatened and endangered species is just one of many issues facing the U.S. For each of the issues below, do you think we should be doing less, doing about the same, or doing more?** *Mark* the *box* ☒ *of your response for each item.*

	Do less	Do about the same	Do more
Make government more efficient.…….....	1☐	2☐	3☐
Improve education..…….....	1☐	2☐	3☐
Protect threatened and endangered species.....	1☐	2☐	3☐
Improve roads and highways.....	1☐	2☐	3☐
Encourage economic growth and jobs.....	1☐	2☐	3☐
Clean up air and water pollution.....	1☐	2☐	3☐

Some people are interested in protecting threatened and endangered species because:

- They may be a source of enjoyment and learning for people now and in the future.
- They may help to maintain a healthy ecosystem.
- They exist and should not be endangered by man's actions.

Some people are concerned about the costs of protecting threatened and endangered species because the protection activities may:

- Place restrictions on what people can do, such as limiting recreation, forestry, and fishing activities.
- Increase the cost of producing and providing goods such as food, drinking water, and lumber.

Q3 **How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?** *Mark the box ☒ of your response for each statement.*

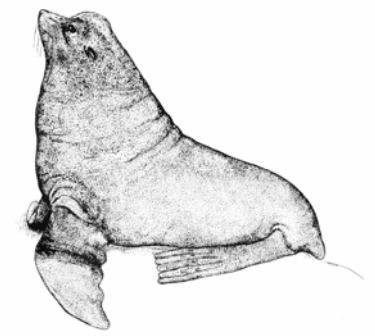
	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
Protecting threatened and endangered species is important to me.....	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
Protecting jobs is more important than protecting threatened and endangered species.....	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

Seals and Sea Lions in the U.S.

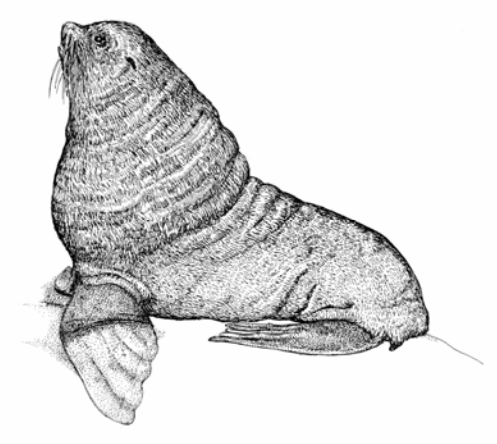
- Today, most seals and sea lions in U.S. waters are found in the Pacific Ocean. The figure on the next page shows pictures of seal and sea lion species found along the Pacific Coast from California to Alaska and in Hawaii.
- About 50 to 100 years ago, several seal and sea lion species in U.S. waters were nearly hunted to extinction, but with bans on hunting and other protection actions, these species have rebounded.

Seals and Sea Lions found along the Pacific Coast from California to Alaska and in Hawaii

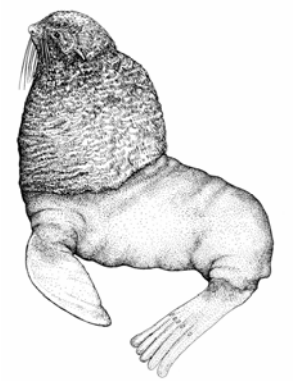
Almost 2 million total



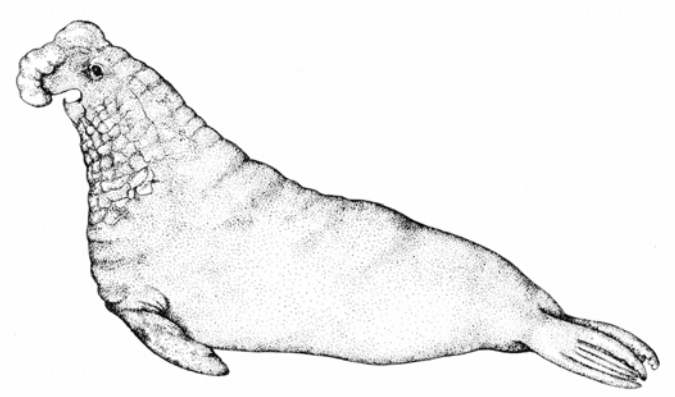
CALIFORNIA SEA LION
About 200,000 and increasing.
Many in California.



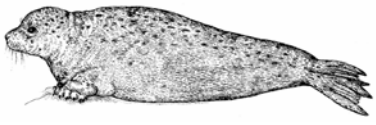
STELLER SEA LION
About 80,000 and decreasing.
Listed as endangered in most of Alaska.



NORTHERN FUR SEAL
About 800,000 and decreasing.



NORTHERN ELEPHANT SEAL
About 150,000 and stable.
Once nearly extinct.



HARBOR SEAL
About 300,000 and stable.

OTHERS
Guadalupe fur seal (listed as threatened), Hawaiian monk seal (listed as endangered), ringed seal, spotted seal, bearded seal, and ribbon seal.
About 300,000 and slowly decreasing.

Today, three seal and sea lion species in U.S. waters are listed as threatened or endangered.

- The Guadalupe fur seal (found mostly in Mexico, with a few in Southern California) is listed as threatened. Since hunting was banned, its population has been increasing.
- The Hawaiian monk seal, found only in Hawaii, is listed as endangered. With protection efforts over the past 20 years, its population remains small but is no longer decreasing.
- The Steller sea lion is listed as endangered and its population continues to decline. It is the only seal or sea lion species where additional protection efforts are now being considered under the Endangered Species Act.

Q4 **Have you personally observed seals or sea lions in nature (outside of zoos and aquariums)?** *Circle the number of the best answer.*

1 Yes
2 No
9 Don't know

Some Steller Sea Lion Facts

- Steller sea lions are the largest sea lions. They can grow to 11 feet long and weigh up to 2400 pounds.
- An adult Steller sea lion eats about 10 tons of food per year, mostly fish like pollock, mackerel, herring, cod, and salmon that commercial fishermen catch for people to eat.
- They do not migrate and generally stay within a few hundred miles of where they are born.
- Aside from the fish they eat, scientists have not identified any species that are greatly affected by how many Steller sea lions there are.

Q5 **Before today, had you ever seen, heard, or read about Steller sea lions?** *Circle best answer.*

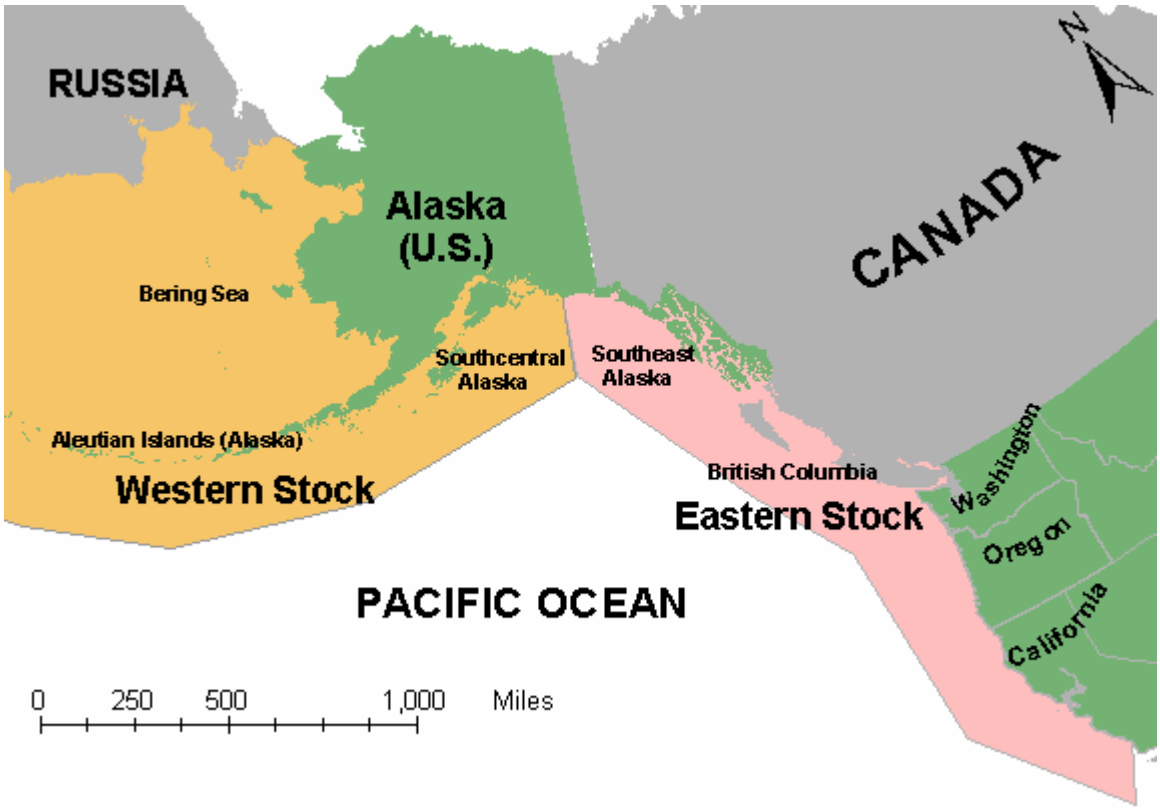
1 Yes
2 No
9 Don't know

The Western and Eastern Stocks of Steller Sea Lions

Scientists divide the Steller sea lion species into two groups, called "stocks". These stocks have small genetic differences, live in different areas, and rarely mix. The map below shows the areas where each stock swims and fishes.

Western stock: From Southcentral Alaska to the Aleutian Islands of Alaska

Eastern stock: From California to Southeast Alaska

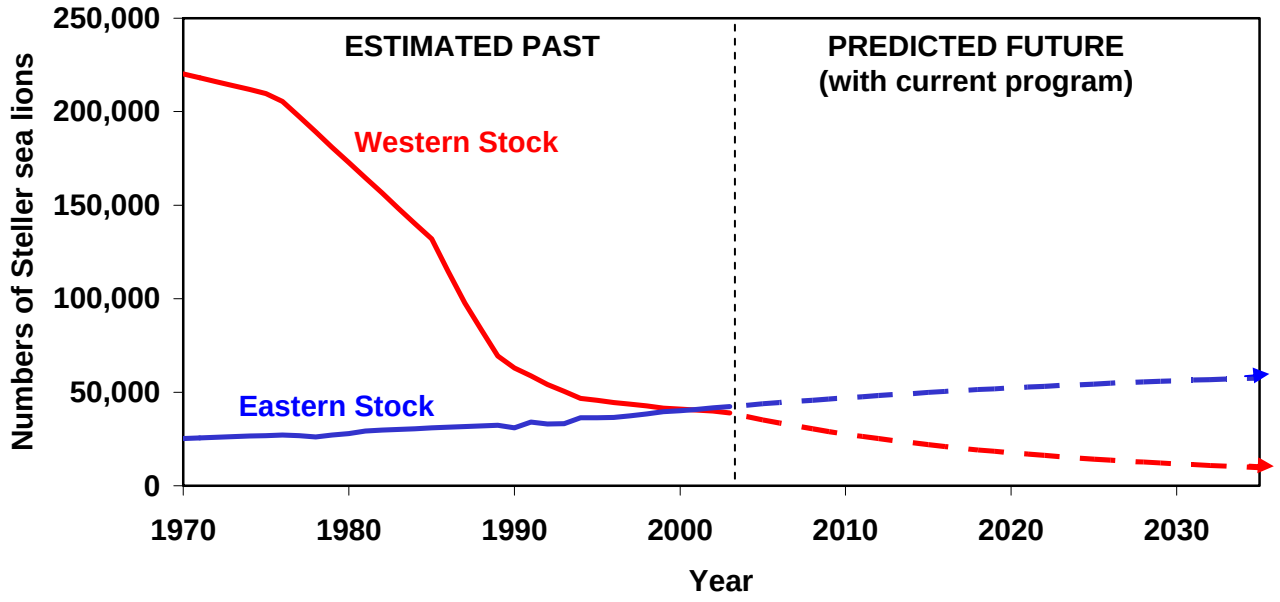


Most Steller sea lions live in U.S. waters, where activities like hunting and fishing are subject to U.S. laws. Russia (where only a few Steller sea lions live) and Canada also protect Steller sea lions with laws similar to those in the U.S.

Q6 **Have you ever lived in or visited coastal areas of Alaska where the <u>Western stock</u> live?**
Circle the number of the best answer.

1 Yes
2 No

The figure below shows the estimated past population of Steller sea lions from 1970 to 2003. The figure also shows the predicted future population if recent trends continue.



Over the past 15 years, the federal government has taken actions to protect Steller sea lions, such as banning shootings of Steller sea lions and starting restrictions on commercial fishing.

With these actions:

- The Western stock currently is listed as endangered. The population continues to decrease but at a slower rate than before these actions were taken.

- The Eastern stock currently is listed as threatened. The population is slowly increasing in most areas. Scientists believe the Eastern stock may no longer be threatened in about 20 years.

Q7 **After looking at the information on this page, how concerned are you, if at all, about the Western and Eastern stocks of Steller sea lions?** *Mark the box ☒ of your response.*

	Not at all concerned	A little concerned	Somewhat concerned	Very concerned	Extremely concerned
Western stock.....	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
Eastern stock.....	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

Steller Sea Lions and Commercial Fishing

Scientists believe a major threat to the Western stock of Steller sea lions is commercial fishing catching the same fish that Steller sea lions eat.

- Few people know that in the last 30 years there has been a large increase in commercial fishing where the Western stock live. Now, nearly half of all U.S. commercial fish are caught in these waters.
- Commercial fishing is not considered a major problem where the Eastern stock live.

The federal government has started restricting commercial fishing in areas where the Western stock of Steller sea lions live so that more fish are available for them to eat.

- The current program of fishing restrictions limits where and how often boats can fish and the amount and type of fish they can catch.
- Even with the current program, scientists believe the Western stock will remain endangered, and in 60 years will decrease in population from today's 40,000 to less than 1,000 (they would be nearly extinct).

Q8 **Commercial fishing restrictions to help Steller sea lions have made fishing more costly. The result has been some loss of jobs and income to commercial fishermen (estimated to be 5% or less so far). This has also led to higher fish prices.**

How concerned are you, if at all, about each of the following? *Mark the box ☒ of your response.*

	Not at all concerned	A little concerned	Somewhat concerned	Very concerned	Extremely concerned
	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Lost commercial fishing jobs due to Steller sea lion protection…….....	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
Higher prices for fish you buy due to Steller sea lion protection……	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

Additional Steller Sea Lion Protection

To prevent the Western stock of Steller sea lions from going extinct, the federal government is considering more fishing restrictions, more enforcement of the fishing restrictions, and more monitoring of Steller sea lions. Depending on what is done, the Western stock may even recover.

- "Recover" means the population increases enough so that it is no longer endangered or threatened.
- Some of the Eastern stock may also be helped by additional fishing restrictions.
- But, scientists believe the additional actions will have little impact (good or bad) on other species.

Doing more to protect the Western stock of Steller sea lions will cost every U.S. household more money.

- Your household's costs increase through higher prices for fish and fish products you buy and through increases in your federal taxes.
- Most of the increased cost will occur in the first 20 years while commercial fishing adjusts to more restrictions, and to fund government monitoring and enforcement.

Q9 **How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?** *Mark the box ☒ of your response for each statement.*

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
	▼	▼	▼	▼	▼
Even if it costs us more money, we should do more so that the Western stock never goes extinct.....	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
So long as the Eastern stock recovers, it doesn't matter to me if the Western stock goes extinct.....	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

Q10 **The 15,000 Steller sea lions living near the Aleutian Islands (see map on page 5) are the most affected by commercial fishing and will be the first to go extinct. Protecting Steller sea lions living near the Aleutian Islands would require doing more and spending more than protecting Steller sea lions that live in other Western stock areas.**

Which of the following options do you prefer for protecting areas where the Western stock of Steller sea lions live? *Circle number of best response.*

1 Protect the Western stock in most areas where they currently live, even if it costs more.

2 Protect the Western stock in most areas where they currently live, except along the Aleutian Islands. This would cost less.

3 Don't do or spend any more to protect the Western stock, even though they may become nearly extinct and live in very few areas where they currently live.

What Alternatives Do You Prefer?

As we have discussed, alternatives are being considered to do more to protect Steller sea lions. Your opinions are important to help understand what alternatives the public prefers.

The next several questions compare the expected results after 60 years under alternative programs of fishing restrictions and government enforcement and monitoring. In each question:

- Alternative A presents the expected results after 60 years under the current program. Continuing the current program would not increase the costs to your household.

- Alternatives B and C present the expected results after 60 years under two of the many possible alternatives that do more and cost more to protect Steller sea lions.
  - The added cost to your household each year for 20 years above the cost of the current program is also listed.
  - Remember, if you spend money for this, it won't be available to buy other things.

Since scientists are still working on the alternatives and the costs, we are asking you several questions (Q11, Q13, Q14) that cover a range of possible alternatives and costs.

Q11 **Below the table, indicate which of these three alternatives you most prefer, and which you least prefer.**

	Results in 60 years for each alternative		
	Alternative A **Current program**	**Alternative B**	**Alternative C**
Western Stock Population status……. (Endangered now)	Endangered	Endangered	Endangered
Total population…….. (40,000 now)	Nearly extinct Less than 1,000	30,000	40,000
Areas where they will live….. (Compared to where they now live)	Very few areas	Most areas except along the Aleutian Islands	Most areas
Eastern Stock Population status……. (Threatened now)	Recovered	Recovered	Recovered
Population size…… (40,000 now)	60,000	60,000	60,000
Added cost to your household each year for 20 years…….	$0	$15	$25

	Alternative A	**Alternative B**	**Alternative C**
Which alternative do you prefer the most? *Check one box------>*	☐	☐	☐
Which alternative do you prefer the least? *Check one box------>*	☐	☐	☐

Q12 **Please write a comment that helps us understand your responses in Q11.**

_____

_____

_____

Q13 **Here again is the current program and two other alternatives. Below the table, indicate which of these three alternatives you most prefer, and which you least prefer.**

	Results in 60 years for each alternative		
	Alternative A Current program	**Alternative B**	**Alternative C**
Western Stock Population status……. (Endangered now)	Endangered	Threatened	Recovered
Total population…….. (40,000 now)	Nearly extinct Less than 1,000	75,000	200,000
Areas where they will live….. (Compared to where they now live)	Very few areas	Most areas	Most areas
Eastern Stock Population status……. (Threatened now)	Recovered	Recovered	Recovered
Population size…… (40,000 now)	60,000	80,000	80,000
Added cost to your household each year for 20 years…….	$0	$45	$75

	Alternative A	**Alternative B**	**Alternative C**
Which alternative do you prefer the most? *Check one box------>*	☐	☐	☐
Which alternative do you prefer the least? *Check one box------>*	☐	☐	☐

Q14 **Below the table, indicate which of these three alternatives you most prefer, and which you least prefer.**

	Results in 60 years for each alternative		
	Alternative A Current program	**Alternative B**	**Alternative C**
Western Stock Population status……. (Endangered now)	Endangered	Endangered	Recovered
Total population…….. (40,000 now)	Nearly extinct Less than 1,000	20,000	200,000
Areas where they will live….. (Compared to where they now live)	Very few areas	Most areas except along the Aleutian Islands	Most areas
Eastern Stock Population status……. (Threatened now)	Recovered	Recovered	Recovered
Population size…… (40,000 now)	60,000	60,000	60,000
Added cost to your household each year for 20 years…….	$0	$10	$65

	Alternative A	**Alternative B**	**Alternative C**
Which alternative do you prefer the most? *Check one box------>*	☐	☐	☐
Which alternative do you prefer the least? *Check one box------>*	☐	☐	☐

Q15 **The following are statements some people tell us about their answers to Q11, Q13, and Q14. How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?** *Mark the box ☒ of your response for each statement.*

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
I did not feel it was my responsibility to pay for the protection of Steller sea lions…	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
There was not enough information for me to make an informed choice between the alternatives……...	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
The added costs I was willing to pay were just to protect Steller sea lions, and not to protect other species…….	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
I was concerned that the federal government will not effectively protect Steller sea lions……	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐
I should not have to pay more federal taxes for any reason……...	1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

Q16 **These questions were asked to obtain public input for decision makers to consider along with information from scientists and planners. People feel differently about how confident they are with their selection of alternatives and the costs they would have to pay.**

How confident are you that your answers in Q11, Q13, and Q14 accurately reflect how you feel about the alternatives for protecting Steller sea lions? *Check the best answer.*

Not at all confident	Slightly confident	Somewhat confident	Very confident	Extremely confident
1 ☐	2 ☐	3 ☐	4 ☐	5 ☐

About You and Your Household

This information is used to compare our survey respondents with the U.S. population. Your responses will be kept confidential and separate from your name and address. Material identifying you will be destroyed at the end of the study.

H1 **Are you male or female?** 1 Male 2 Female

H2 **In what year were you born?** 19____

H3 **How many people do you live with in each of the following age groups?**
If none for a category please write "0".

____ Under 18 ____ 18 to 35 ____ 36 to 60 ____ Over 60

H4 **Which of the following best describes your employment status?** *Circle number of the best answer.*

1 Employed full-time
2 Employed part-time
3 Homemaker
4 Student
5 Retired
6 Currently unemployed
7 Other (*please specify)*_____

H5 **Have you or a family member been employed in the commercial fishing industry?** *Circle the best answer.*

1 Yes
2 No
9 Don't know

H6 **What is the highest grade or level of school you have completed?** *Circle number of the best answer.*

1 Some high school or less
2 High school diploma or equivalent
3 Some college
4 Two year college degree (AA, AS) or technical school
5 Four year college graduate (BA, BS)
6 Some graduate work but did not receive a graduate degree
7 Graduate degree (MA, MS, MBA, PhD, JD, MD, etc.)

H7 **Do you own or rent your residence?** *Circle the number of your answer.*

1 Own 2 Rent

(Please continue to the next page)

H8 **How many listed telephone numbers does your household have?**

_____ listed telephone numbers

H9 **Are you Hispanic or Latino?** *Circle number of the best answer.*

1 Yes
2 No

H10 **Which of the following best describes you?** *Circle one or more.*

1 Asian
2 American Indian or Alaska Native
3 Black or African American
4 Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
5 White

H11 **What was your household income (before taxes) in 2003?** *Circle one number.*

1 Less than $10,000
2 $10,000 to $19,999
3 $20,000 to $29,999
4 $30,000 to $39,999
5 $40,000 to $49,999
6 $50,000 to $59,999
7 $60,000 to $79,999
8 $80,000 to $99,999
9 $100,000 to $124,999
10 $125,000 to $149,999
11 $150,000 to $200,000
12 $200,000 or more

Is there anything we overlooked?
Please use the space below to provide us with any other comments you would like to make.

YOUR PARTICIPATION IS GREATLY APPRECIATED!

ATTACHMENT 2

Draft Telephone Follow-Up

[IF OBVIOUS YOUTH – Ask to speak with an adult]

Hello, my name is _____ and I am calling from PA Consulting in [City, State] on behalf of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. I am trying to reach [name on address].

[IF RESPONDENT IS NOT AVAILABLE] → Is there another adult of the household that I could speak to?

[IF NOT AVAILABLE] → Thank you, I will call back later. When would be a good time to reach [name, or another adult head of household]?

[IF QUALIFIED RESPONDENT IS ON THE PHONE]

QA Recently, we mailed you a questionnaire asking your opinions about the future of Steller sea lions in Alaska and $X as a token of our appreciation for completing the survey. The survey had a picture of Steller sea lions on the cover and some color graphics inside. Do you remember receiving that questionnaire?

1 YES
2 NO *[SKIP TO QA2]*

QA1 As of today, we have not received your completed questionnaire. Your household is part of a small group of people we are asking for opinions, so your response is very important. If we send you another survey, could you find the time to complete the survey and return it to us within a week of receiving it?

1 YES – SEND NEW SURVEY *[SKIP TO VERIFY]*
2 YES – DO NOT NEED ANOTHER SURVEY *[THANK YOU. SKIP TO CONTINUE]*
3 SURVEY HAS ALREADY BEEN RETURNED *[THANK YOU, SKIP TO CONTINUE]*
4 NO *[SKIP TO QB]*

QA2 We are collecting public opinions for the federal government to consider when developing action plans for threatened and endangered species in Alaska. Your household is part of a small group of people we are asking for opinions, so your response is very important. If we send you another survey, could you return the survey to us within a week after you receive it?

1 YES – SEND NEW SURVEY *[SKIP TO VERIFY]*
2 YES – DO NOT NEED ANOTHER SURVEY *[SKIP TO CONTINUE]*
3 NO *[SKIP TO QA3]*

QA3 Since we are only contacting a small number of households, it is very important that we hear from your household. Your opinions will represent those of other households similar to you. The survey does not require any special knowledge. Is there another adult head of household that would be interested in completing the survey?

1 YES, GETTING THEM TO THE PHONE *[REPEAT QA2]*
2 YES, BUT NOT AVAILABLE AT THIS TIME *[SET CALLBACK]*
3 NO *[SKIP TO QB]*

QB It is very important for our analysis that we understand how those who haven't returned the survey compare to those who did. This way we will not misinterpret the results. Could I take about 4 minutes to ask you a few questions that will help us with our work? I'd like to remind you that all of your answers are confidential and your name will not be revealed to anyone.

1 YES *[SKIP TO Q1]*
2 NO *[ASK FOR A MORE CONVENIENT TIME, OTHERWISE, THANK AND TERMINATE]*

VERIFY (If new survey needs to be sent)

I would like to verify some information that I have. I have your name as…

NAME_____
STREET ADDRESS_____
CITY_____STATE _____ ZIP_____
PHONE_____

Thank you, I will send another questionnaire out today.

CONTINUE (If they indicate survey has been or will be returned)

Receiving your completed questionnaire will be very helpful. Could I take 3 minutes to ask you 4 questions to help us with our preliminary results until we receive your completed questionnaire?

1 NO, or NOT NOW → OK. We look forward to receiving your completed questionnaire. [*SKIP TO TERMINATE]*.
2 YES → *[CONTINUE WITH EVALUATE]*

EVALUATE

Q1 **This question is about your overall opinion of the Endangered Species Act. Currently there are 74 mammals, 92 birds, 115 fish, 236 other species such as reptiles and insects, and 746 plants protected under the Endangered Species Act. When you think of the Endangered Species Act, how positive or negative is your general reaction? Is it...** (*Read answer options*)

6 Mostly positive
7 Somewhat positive
8 Neutral
9 Somewhat negative
10 Mostly negative
10 *[DON'T READ – BUT CODE IF STATED]* Don't know

Q2 **I will now read two statements. For each, tell me if you strongly disagree, somewhat disagree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat agree, or strongly agree.**

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
Protecting threatened and endangered species is important to me.....	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐
Protecting jobs is more important than protecting threatened and endangered species.....	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐

[RETURNING SURVEY] → I have just 2 quick questions about you and your household to help us group your responses with others.

[NOT RETURNING SURVEY] → I have just 3 quick questions about you and your household to help us group your responses with others.

Q3 **In what year were you born?** 19_____
Refused

Q4 **[SKIP Q4 IF THEY INDICATE THEY ARE RETURNING THE SURVEY] Which of the following best describes the highest level of education you have completed?**

1 8 years or less of school
2 9 to 12 years of school (high school)
3 Some college or technical school
4 Completed technical school or an associates degree program
5 Completed four year college degree
6 Some or completed graduate school work
9 REFUSED

Q5 **Into which of the following groups does your total annual household income fall before taxes?**

1 Under $30,000
2 $30,000 - $49,999
3 $50,000 - $79,999
4 $80,000 and over

[IF RETURNING SURVEY] → Thank you, this will help with our preliminary analysis. Receiving your completed questionnaire will greatly help to have an accurate understanding of public opinion about government actions to protect Steller sea lions.

[IF NOT RETURNING QUESTIONNAIRE] → That's all the questions I have for you. Do you have any comments that you would like to add? Thank you for your time. We really appreciate your participation in this brief survey. Thanks again, and have a good evening.

TERMINATE

[TO BE COMPLETED BY INTERVIEWER]
Respondent gender: MALE
FEMALE

LANG Language or other barrier:
1 YES, POSSIBLE LANGUAGE BARRIER
2 YES, DEFINITE LANGUAGE BARRIER
3 NO LANGUAGE, BUT OTHER TYPE OF BARRIER *[SPECIFY]*
4 NO BARRIERS

DID THE RESPONDENT INDICATE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING?

A	I don't care about Steller sea lions or T&E species	NO	YES
B	I don't know about Steller sea lions, T&E species, etc.	NO	YES

OTHER RESPONDENT COMMENTS

_____

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS AND ANSWERS

[*If concerned about purpose of the call*] This is not a marketing or sales call. We are collecting public input for government, industry, and citizen groups to consider when developing action plans for threatened and endangered species in Alaska. I want to assure you that your answers will be kept confidential and your name will not be revealed to anyone.

[*If asking about the study sponsor*] This survey is sponsored by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, a U.S. government agency charged with making decisions about threatened and endangered marine mammals.

[Response to: "Why did you send money with the survey?"] The survey is very important and we find we can get more citizen input for less money by including a small token of our appreciation with the survey. More people return the survey faster, so we don't have to contact as many households, or contact you as often, to get an accurate sample of the public's input.

[I don't know anything about Steller Sea Lions]. The survey does not require to you have any special knowledge, we just ask that you consider each question and respond with your own opinion.

[I don't care about Steller sea lions]. It is important that we hear that on the survey. If we only receive surveys from people who care a lot, that would result in biased results about what public opinion really is.

ATTACHMENT 3

Advance Letter

<DATE>
John Smith
123 Main Street
Anywhere, USA 12345

Dear <Name>

We need your help to learn what the public thinks about protecting Steller sea lions. The population of Steller sea lions has been rapidly declining. The federal government is considering what more, if anything, to do to protect them. We want to consider your opinions, along with information from scientists and planners, when deciding what do.

In the next few days, you will receive a survey in the mail, with pictures and questions about seals and sea lions. It should be answered by either the male or female head of household. The survey does not require any special knowledge.

Even though you may not be familiar with this issue, your opinion matters. Any government actions to protect Steller sea lions will affect all U.S. households through federal government spending. Your household is part of a small number of household across the country scientifically selected to help. To keep costs low and to make sure we hear from a true cross-section of households, we need to hear from you.

This survey is being conducted by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, a U.S. government agency charged with making decisions about Steller sea lion management activities.

Thank you in advance for your help.

Sincerely,

Dan Lew
Project Director
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Letter with First Mailing of Survey

<DATE>

John Smith
123 Main Street
Anywhere, USA 12345

Dear <Name>

Enclosed is the questionnaire I wrote to you about last week.

We need your help to learn what the public thinks about protecting Steller sea lions. The population of Steller sea lions has been rapidly declining. The federal government is considering what more, if anything, to do to protect them.

Even though you may not be familiar with this issue, your opinion matters. Any government actions to protect Steller sea lions will affect all U.S. households through federal government spending. Although your participation is voluntary, your household is one of only a select few from across the country scientifically selected to provide opinions to be considered along with information from scientists and planners. To keep costs low and to make sure we hear from a true cross-section of the public, we need to hear from you.

Your questionnaire should be completed by either the male or female head of your household. The survey takes most people about 20 minutes to complete, sometimes more, sometimes less. The survey does not require any special knowledge – we just ask that you consider each question and respond with your own opinion.

Your answers will be kept confidential, and your name will never be revealed. Information from the survey will only be reported in statistical terms, and all material identifying you will be destroyed at the end of the study. The identification number on the back of the survey is there so that PA Consulting, a survey firm hired to assist us, can check your name off when the questionnaire is returned. If you have any questions, please call <name> at PA Consulting toll-free at 1-800-xxx-xxxx.

We realize your time is valuable, so we have included $x as a small token of our appreciation for your participation. In addition, when the results are fully analyzed we will send you a postcard listing a web site where you can review a summary of the results. We expect to have results in the fall of 2005.

Thank you for your help, and please remember to complete all the questions.

Sincerely,

Dan Lew
Project Director
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Reminder Postcard

<DATE>

Last week a questionnaire was mailed to you seeking your opinions about what more, if anything, should be done to protect Steller Sea lions, a threatened and endangered species.

If you have already completed and returned the questionnaire, please accept our sincere thanks. If you have not completed and returned the survey, we ask that you do so today.

It is very important that we hear from you. You are one of a small number of households across the country selected to give your opinions on these matters. Your response will help shape decisions about federal government actions and spending on this topic. However, a high rate of participation is required to include public opinion from the questionnaire in these decisions.

If you need another copy of the questionnaire, please call PA Consulting, a survey firmed hired to assist us, at 1-800-xxx-xxxx and a questionnaire will be mailed to you today.

Thank you for your help.

Dan Lew
Project Director
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

ATTACHMENT 4

Literature Review

This study is concerned with measuring the economic benefits of protecting the threatened Eastern and endangered Western stocks of Steller sea lions. These benefits are primarily the result of the non-consumptive values that individuals attribute to such protection. By non-consumptive value, we refer to active use values such as viewing (rather than consumptive use values such as harvesting) and passive use values to protect or restore Steller sea lions apart from on-site active use, such as reading about or seeing films about Steller sea lions, protecting Steller sea lions for use by others now and in the future (bequest values), and protecting Steller sea lions unrelated to direct human use such as for ecologic purposes (existence values).[7]

Since threatened and endangered (T&E) species, like Steller sea lions, are not traded in observable markets, standard market-based approaches to estimate their economic value cannot be applied. As a result, studies that attempt to estimate this value must rely on non-market valuation methods, specifically stated preference (SP) methods (Mitchell and Carson, 1989; Bateman and Willis, 1999; Louviere, Hensher, and Swait, 1999). These survey-based methods involve asking individuals to reveal their preferences or values for non-market goods, such as the protection of T&E species, through their responses to questions in hypothetical market situations.

One particular SP method, the contingent valuation method (CVM), has been the dominant approach for valuing T&E species.[8] In a typical contingent valuation survey, a public good is described, such as a program to protect one or more T&E species, and respondents are asked questions to elicit their willingness-to-pay (WTP) for the public good through a payment vehicle, like taxes or contributions to a trust fund (Cummings, Brookshire and Schulze, 1986; Mitchell and Carson, 1989; Arrow, et al., 1993)[9]. Contingent valuation methods are differentiated by the way they elicit WTP. Respondents are commonly asked to state their maximum WTP (an "open-ended" CVM question), choose the amount they are willing to pay from a list of values (a "payment card" CVM question), or accept or reject a specific amount (a "referendum", or discrete-choice, CVM question). Variations of these question formats exist, but these are the most frequently used. When asked properly, answers to CVM questions yield an estimate of compensating surplus or compensating variation, depending upon the format of the question posed (Freeman, 1993). Although the CVM has been subject to much criticism (e.g., Diamond and Hausman [1991]), the NOAA Panel on Contingent Valuation found that despite its

[7] See Freeman (1993) for an overview of issues related to motivations for valuing non-market goods, including various use and non-use motivations, and Cummings and Harrison (1995) for a discussion of the limitations of empirical methods to place dollar values on specific motivations.

[8] Some studies have used other SP methods, although this is only seen in studies that do not have as a primary focus the valuation of individual species. For example, Blamey, Rolfe, Bennett, and Morrison (2000) use the choice experiment SP method to value the number of endangered species in the Desert Uplands region of Central Queensland, Australia. The number of endangered species was included as one of 6 attributes that described alternative tree clearing policies allowing the value of changes in the number of endangered species to be calculated (irrespective of the actual species lost).

[9] While willingness-to-accept (WTA) is sometimes the more relevant welfare measure, empirical and experimental evidence has pointed to the use of WTP welfare measures in stated preference surveys (e.g., Hanemann [1991], Arrow, et al., [1993], Adamowicz, Bhardwaj, and McNab [1993], Mansfield [1999]).

problems, "a well-conducted CV study provides an adequately reliable benchmark" (Arrow *et al.*, 1993) to begin discussions on appropriate values.

To date, over 30 studies, representing dozens of species, have been conducted to estimate the economic value of one or more threatened or endangered (T&E) species, all employing contingent valuation methods. Loomis and White (1996) conducted a meta-analysis of 20 T&E (and rare) species valuation studies and found that annual WTP to protect rare and threatened and endangered species ranged from $6 to $95. Much of the variation they found in WTP values could be explained by the type of species valued (e.g., whether it is a mammal or bird), by the change in population being valued, and by the type of individual being asked to provide WTP (e.g., user vs. non-user).

T&E species valuation studies can be categorized into two groups—*aggregate* species valuation studies and *disaggregate* species valuation studies. The former type of study asks respondents to value a group of T&E species, or a group of species that include T&E species, as a whole. These studies yield WTP estimates that cannot be assigned to any constituent species within the group of species valued. An example of this type of study is Olsen, Richards, and Scott (1991), which involved estimating WTP to protect salmon and steelhead in the Pacific Northwest. The resulting welfare values cannot be divided among the different salmon species in the region, or separated from the WTP to protect steelhead. Similarly, economic values estimated by Berrens, et al. (2000) for protecting 11 T&E fish species in New Mexico and Ekstrand and Loomis (1998) for protecting all 62 T&E species in the Four Corners region of the U.S. cannot be disaggregated to identify values of individual species. As a result, the focus in this appendix is on the latter type of valuation studies, those that provide economic values for individual species.

The individual T&E species valued in these disaggregate species valuation studies range from "charismatic megafauna" like owls (Rubin, Helfand, and Loomis, 1991; Hagen, et al., 1992; Loomis and Ekstrand, 1997; Loomis and Ekstrand, 1998; Giraud, Loomis, and Johnson, 1999), wolves (Duffield, 1992), and bald eagles (Boyle and Bishop, 1987; Swanson, 1996; Stevens, et al., 1991; Stevens, et al., 1994), to lesser known species such as the striped shiner (Boyle and Bishop, 1987) and the silvery minnow (Berrens, et al., 2000). Of particular relevance are studies that focus on estimating the public's WTP for protecting T&E marine mammals in the U.S.[10] These include Hageman (1985), Samples and Hollyer (1990), Loomis and Larson (1994), Giraud, et al. (2002), and Solomon, Corey-Luse, and Halvorsen (2003).

Of these, one provides estimates of the economic value of Steller sea lions to Alaskans and the overall U.S. population (Giraud, et al., 2002).[11] The questionnaire used in this study asked a referendum CVM question that involved voting for a measure that would create an "Enhanced Steller Sea Lion Recovery Program", but would lead to an increase in federal taxes to the respondent's household. Surveys were mailed to a stratified sample of U.S. households, Alaska households, and households living in Alaska boroughs that contain Steller sea lion critical habitat. The overall response rate was 63.6%, with a 51.16% response rate from the national

[10] There are several studies that value species in other countries (Fredman, 1995; White, et al., 1997; Langford, et al., 1998; Jakobsson and Dragun, 2001; Macmillan, et al., 2002; Kontoleon and Swanson, 2003), including one that values the Mediterranean monk seal, which is critically endangered in Europe (Langford, et al., 1998).

[11] See also Turcin (2002) and Turcin and Giraud (2003).

sample. In the U.S. sample, responses to the CVM question yielded a mean annual household WTP of $100.22 (in 2000 dollars), which was adjusted to $61.13 under the assumption that protest respondents, which comprise over 20% of the sample, and non-respondents have zero WTP. As noted in the supporting statement, several shortcomings of the survey, particularly the absence of information about the Eastern stock and the somewhat vague description of the public good to be valued, bring into question the validity and interpretation of the estimated welfare estimates for Steller sea lion protection. Although no other study values Steller sea lions, several studies provide estimates of other marine mammal species, including seals and whales. These are briefly discussed below.

Hageman (1985) used a mail survey of California residents to estimate the value of bottlenose dolphins, California sea otters, Northern elephant seals, gray whales, and blue whales. Of these, only the California sea otter (threatened), gray whale (threatened), and blue whales (endangered) were listed species at the time the study was conducted. Respondents to the survey were asked to indicate their WTP for a protection fund to preserve existing population levels of each species in payment card with a follow-up open-ended CVM questions. Mean annual household WTP across species ranged from a low of $21.69 for Northern elephant seals to a high of $28.78 for blue whales (all in 1984 dollars). It is important to note that these estimates were calculated from small samples, ranging from 93 to 174 respondents, resulting from a survey implementation with a correspondingly low overall response rate of 21%. The poor response rate likely is due in large part to the complex questionnaire, which was not designed to maximize response rates (very dense and small text, complicated instructions, confusing layout, etc.). The fact that only California households were sampled precludes the extension of value estimates to the larger U.S. population, unless it is assumed that preferences for marine mammals are identical outside California. Pate and Loomis (1997) provide evidence that preferences for wetland and wildlife protection in the San Joaquin Valley in California are different for respondents who live further away, which suggests one reason why assuming identical preferences for non-target populations is not prudent. This portability issue is a trait this study has in common with other marine mammal valuation studies, specifically, Samples and Hollyer (1990), Loomis and Larson (1994), and Solomon, Corey-Luse, and Halvorsen (2003).

Samples and Hollyer (1990) conducted a study to understand public values for humpback whales and Hawaiian monk seals. Both are listed as endangered under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Information about how much money or time respondents would be willing to donate to preserve these species was collected in an in-person survey from a small stratified sample of Oahu (Hawaii) residents based on age, income, and gender. Several survey versions were employed that differed in the order the species were valued and whether respondents were told that only one or both species were threatened. Across survey versions, the mean WTP values (sum of the monetary WTP and time WTP valued at $1/hour) ranged from $125 to $142 for humpback whales and from $62 to $103 for Hawaiian monk seals (in 1986 dollars). These values do not account for the possible presence of protest respondents, as there were no questions to probe why respondents were not willing to pay anything (these respondents were all assigned a zero value and included in the analysis), a standard practice in CVM surveys (Carson, Flores, and Meade, 2001). Additionally, the study uses open-ended CVM questions to elicit WTP values. Open-ended questions have been criticized as lacking incentive compatibility and leading to biased WTP estimates (e.g., Arrow, et al., 1993; Hanemann, 1994; Carson, Flores, and

Meade, 2001). As with the Hageman study, additional caution should be taken in interpreting these welfare estimates as they are based on very small samples (each between 53 and 72 responses) and are for a limited geographic sample.

To assess whether WTP for gray whale increases is invariant to the size of the increase, Loomis and Larson (1994) undertook an in-person intercept survey of whale-watchers and a household mail survey in California. Using open-ended CVM questions, the questionnaires asked respondents how much they would be willing to pay into a special protection fund that would be used to increase the gray whale population by 50% and 100%. It is unclear whether any mention was made of the gray whale's threatened status, or whether the population increases would affect this status. The intercept survey targeted visitors at four whale-watching locations, while the mail survey was sent to a random sample of California households. Overall response rates were much higher than those achieved by Hageman (1985) and Samples and Hollyer (1990), with 71.3% (672 respondents) of the intercepts yielding completed surveys and 54% of the household surveys (519 respondents) being completed and returned. Visitors were willing to pay $25 per year on average for a 50% increase and $29.73 for a 100% increase, while households were willing to pay $16.18 and $18.14 per year, respectively (in 1992 dollars). Values for the larger population increase were found to be significantly greater, indicating preferences that are consistent with economic theory.

The most recent study to value a T&E marine mammal species is a study of the endangered manatee (Solomon, Corey-Luse, and Halvorsen, 2004). The paper focused on safe minimum standard issues, but includes a brief discussion of research involving the use of CVM to value the manatee in Florida. A mail survey was sent to a sample of households in Citrus County (Florida) drawn from phone books and stratified by gender. The survey achieved a 36% response rate. Respondents were asked to indicate their WTP in donations to a fund to protect manatees under the counterfactual that government protection of manatees in Florida was removed. A modified payment card CVM question was asked, and a mean household WTP of $10.25 (in 2001 dollars) was reported based on a sample size of 297. Although the samples were pooled to calculate WTP, the representativeness of the households in the sample is questionable due to the stratification of the sample by gender using phone book listings.[12] Additionally, like other studies discussed above, the small sample and low response rate preclude extrapolating the results to the population (in this case, households in Citrus County). The study also does not mention whether protest respondents were identified and how they are treated in the analysis.

An important difference between these studies relates to what they are seeking to value. In Loomis and Larson (1994), respondents are asked for the WTP for enhanced population levels for gray whales. This is in contrast to Hageman (1985), Samples and Hollyer (1990), and Solomon, et al. (2004), all of whom ask respondents to value protecting species from decreasing from current levels. That is, these studies elicit WTP for preserving current levels, which implies maintaining species at threatened or endangered levels, not changing them to some improved level. This distinction is important to the extent that WTP varies with both the size of T&E species population levels and with changes to their threatened or endangered status (Fredman, 1995).

[12] Using phone book listings as sampling frames preclude households without phones, who are unlisted, and those who have recently moved.

For several reasons, the estimated values for T&E species generated from these studies are unlikely to provide insights into the economic value of Steller sea lions that can inform policy. First, as mentioned above, most of the studies used samples from limited populations, drawing from residents or households of California (Hageman, 1985; Loomis and Larson, 1994), Oahu (Samples and Hollyer, 1990), or a county in Florida (Solomon, et al., 2004). Hence, they are not easily generalized to the U.S. population. Second, the sample sizes and survey response rates were often too poor to generate WTP estimates that can be justified as representative of the target populations. None of the studies achieved response rates from general population samples exceeding 60%, with most being well below 50%; nor is there any mention in the studies about analyzing non-respondent bias. Moreover, most used sample sizes that are too small to draw inferences from the population. Third, there is no evidence to believe that values for Steller sea lions are similar to other marine mammal species, as is suggested by the range of values for the variety of marine mammals described above. And finally, it is important to recognize that the CVM studies yield economic values for protection at a specific level, but in the policy process economic benefits of protection at numerous levels is desired.

The present study departs from previous T&E species valuation studies by employing a choice experiment (CE), or stated choice, approach for eliciting economic values for Steller sea lions. CE methods are relatively new to the valuation of environmental goods, despite having a long history in the marketing and transportation fields (e.g., Louviere and Woodworth [1983] and Louviere [1992]).[13] A typical CE involves presenting respondents with two or more choice questions, each having a set of alternatives that differ in attributes. For each question, respondents are asked to select the alternative they like best. The choice responses are used to estimate a preference function that depends upon the levels of the attributes. Adamowicz, Louviere, and Swait (1994) were the first to apply the method in non-market valuation in a study of recreational opportunities in Canada. Since then, CE has been used in a number of studies to estimate use values for activities like hunting (Adamowicz, et al., 1997; Bullock, Elston, and Chalmers, 1998) and climbing (Hanley, Wright, and Koop, 2002). The approach has also been used to estimate non-consumptive use values associated with forests in the UK (Hanley, Wright, and Adamowicz, 1998) and Woodland caribou habitat (Adamowicz, et al., 1998).

Hanley, et al. (1998) presents several arguments for why CE may be a better approach for valuing non-market goods than CVM. Of those discussed, two are particularly important—the ability to estimate the value of individual attributes of a choice alternative and the avoidance of "yea-saying" and embedding. In choice experiments, economic values for changes to attributes of a choice alternative can be obtained in a straightforward fashion. For example, if the choice is between competing T&E species protection programs that differ in the resulting population level of a species, the marginal value of changes in population can estimated directly from the estimated preference function. This makes CE particularly attractive as a flexible means of estimating the economic benefits resulting from a wide range of policy instruments. One problem with referendum CVM is "yea-saying" (Blamey, Bennett, Morrison, 1999), which occurs when respondents accept the proffered bid amount regardless of their actual preferences. CE is believed to decrease the possibility of this behavior since respondents are not offered an

[13] Hanley, Wright, and Adamowicz (1998), Alpizar, Carlsson, and Martinsson (2001), and Hanley, Mourato, and Wright (2001) provide useful overviews of choice experiments in non-market valuation.

all-or-nothing choice, but rather choose from among multiple alternatives with different features and costs. Embedding is another problem associated with many CVM applications that CE is believed to mitigate. This issue arises when the estimated preferences are insensitive to the amount of public good provided (Diamond and Hausman, 1993). CE is believed to avoid this problem by building in tests of scope directly into the way it asks for choice information. That is, using our previous example, it is a trivial task to determine whether WTP increases with increases in the population size of the population level of the species, since it is an explicit attribute. As a result, the test for "yea-saying" in a CE involves a hypothesis test of the sign and significance of the parameters related to this attribute.

A few concerns about the CE approach have been identified as well. An obvious one is whether the repeated questioning involved in the CE method leads to respondent fatigue or learning effects (Hanley, et al., 2001). Another is the limits placed on the results by the choice of experimental design (set of attributes and attribute levels that are seen by respondents). Adamowicz, Boxall, Williams, and Louviere (1998) point out that researchers typically choose main effects statistical designs for CE studies and consequently limit the way the attributes can enter the preference function. This is often a practical reality, as identifying interaction effects between attributes requires asking about more choice alternatives through more choice questions which either means more survey versions or longer surveys. An additional concern is identified by Lusk and Schroeder (2004), who conduct a comparison of CE with actual choices (using steak purchases) and show that WTP is overestimated by the CE, suggesting CE results exhibit hypothetical bias.

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ATTACHMENT 2

Draft Telephone Follow-Up

[IF OBVIOUS YOUTH – Ask to speak with an adult]

Hello, my name is _____ and I am calling from PA Consulting in [City, State] on behalf of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. I am trying to reach [name on address]**.**

[IF RESPONDENT IS NOT AVAILABLE] → Is there another adult of the household that I could speak to?

[IF NOT AVAILABLE] → Thank you, I will call back later. When would be a good time to reach [name, or another adult head of household]?

[IF QUALIFIED RESPONDENT IS ON THE PHONE]

QA Recently, we mailed you a questionnaire asking your opinions about the future of Steller sea lions in Alaska and $X as a token of our appreciation for completing the survey. The survey had a picture of Steller sea lions on the cover and some color graphics inside. Do you remember receiving that questionnaire?

1 YES
2 NO *[SKIP TO QA2]*

QA1 As of today, we have not received your completed questionnaire. Your household is part of a small group of people we are asking for opinions, so your response is very important. If we send you another survey, could you find the time to complete the survey and return it to us within a week of receiving it?

1 YES – SEND NEW SURVEY *[SKIP TO VERIFY]*
2 YES – DO NOT NEED ANOTHER SURVEY *[THANK YOU. SKIP TO CONTINUE]*
3 SURVEY HAS ALREADY BEEN RETURNED *[THANK YOU, SKIP TO CONTINUE]*
4 NO *[SKIP TO QB]*

QA2 We are collecting public opinions for the federal government to consider when developing action plans for threatened and endangered species in Alaska. Your household is part of a small group of people we are asking for opinions, so your response is very important. If we send you another survey, could you return the survey to us within a week after you receive it?

1 YES – SEND NEW SURVEY *[SKIP TO VERIFY]*
2 YES – DO NOT NEED ANOTHER SURVEY *[SKIP TO CONTINUE]*
3 NO *[SKIP TO QA3]*

QA3 Since we are only contacting a small number of households, it is very important that we hear from your household. Your opinions will represent those of other households similar to you. The survey does not require any special knowledge. Is there another adult head of household that would be interested in completing the survey?

1 YES, GETTING THEM TO THE PHONE *[REPEAT QA2]*
2 YES, BUT NOT AVAILABLE AT THIS TIME *[SET CALLBACK]*
3 NO *[SKIP TO QB]*

QB It is very important for our analysis that we understand how those who haven't returned the survey compare to those who did. This way we will not misinterpret the results. Could I take about 4 minutes to ask you a few questions that will help us with our work? I'd like to remind you that all of your answers are confidential and your name will not be revealed to anyone.

1 YES *[SKIP TO Q1]*
2 NO *[ASK FOR A MORE CONVENIENT TIME, OTHERWISE, THANK AND TERMINATE]*

VERIFY (If new survey needs to be sent)

I would like to verify some information that I have. I have your name as…

NAME_____
STREET ADDRESS_____
CITY_____STATE _____ ZIP_____
PHONE_____

Thank you, I will send another questionnaire out today.

CONTINUE (If they indicate survey has been or will be returned)

Receiving your completed questionnaire will be very helpful. Could I take 3 minutes to ask you 4 questions to help us with our preliminary results until we receive your completed questionnaire?

1 NO, or NOT NOW → OK. We look forward to receiving your completed questionnaire. [*SKIP TO TERMINATE]*.
2 YES → *[CONTINUE WITH EVALUATE]*

EVALUATE

Q1 **This question is about your overall opinion of the Endangered Species Act. Currently there are 74 mammals, 92 birds, 115 fish, 236 other species such as reptiles and insects, and 746 plants protected under the Endangered Species Act. When you think of the Endangered Species Act, how positive or negative is your general reaction? Is it...** (*Read answer options*)

1 Mostly positive
2 Somewhat positive
3 Neutral
4 Somewhat negative
5 Mostly negative
9 *[DON'T READ – BUT CODE IF STATED]* Don't know

Q2 **I will now read two statements. For each, tell me if you strongly disagree, somewhat disagree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat agree, or strongly agree.**

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
Protecting threatened and endangered species is important to me.....	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐
Protecting jobs is more important than protecting threatened and endangered species.....	1☐	2☐	3☐	4☐	5☐

[RETURNING SURVEY] → I have just 2 quick questions about you and your household to help us group your responses with others.

[NOT RETURNING SURVEY] → I have just 3 quick questions about you and your household to help us group your responses with others.

Q3 **In what year were you born?** 19_____
Refused

Q4 **[SKIP Q4 IF THEY INDICATE THEY ARE RETURNING THE SURVEY] Which of the following best describes the highest level of education you have completed?**

1 8 years or less of school
2 9 to 12 years of school (high school)
3 Some college or technical school
4 Completed technical school or an associates degree program
5 Completed four year college degree
6 Some or completed graduate school work
9 REFUSED

Q5 **Into which of the following groups does your total annual household income fall before taxes?**

1 Under $30,000
2 $30,000 - $49,999
3 $50,000 - $79,999
4 $80,000 and over

[IF RETURNING SURVEY] → Thank you, this will help with our preliminary analysis. Receiving your completed questionnaire will greatly help to have an accurate understanding of public opinion about government actions to protect Steller sea lions.

[IF NOT RETURNING QUESTIONNAIRE] → That's all the questions I have for you. Do you have any comments that you would like to add? Thank you for your time. We really appreciate your participation in this brief survey. Thanks again, and have a good evening.

TERMINATE

[TO BE COMPLETED BY INTERVIEWER]
Respondent gender: MALE
FEMALE

LANG Language or other barrier:
1 YES, POSSIBLE LANGUAGE BARRIER
2 YES, DEFINITE LANGUAGE BARRIER
3 NO LANGUAGE, BUT OTHER TYPE OF BARRIER *[SPECIFY]*
4 NO BARRIERS

DID THE RESPONDENT INDICATE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING?

A	I don't care about Steller sea lions or T&E species	NO	YES
B	I don't know about Steller sea lions, T&E species, etc.	NO	YES

OTHER RESPONDENT COMMENTS

_____

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS AND ANSWERS

[*If concerned about purpose of the call*] This is not a marketing or sales call. We are collecting public input for government, industry, and citizen groups to consider when developing action plans for threatened and endangered species in Alaska. I want to assure you that your answers will be kept confidential and your name will not be revealed to anyone.

[*If asking about the study sponsor*] This survey is sponsored by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, a U.S. government agency charged with making decisions about threatened and endangered marine mammals.

[Response to: "Why did you send money with the survey?"] The survey is very important and we find we can get more citizen input for less money by including a small token of our appreciation with the survey. More people return the survey faster, so we don't have to contact as many households, or contact you as often, to get an accurate sample of the public's input.

[I don't know anything about Steller Sea Lions]. The survey does not require to you have any special knowledge, we just ask that you consider each question and respond with your own opinion.

[I don't care about Steller sea lions]. It is important that we hear that on the survey. If we only receive surveys from people who care a lot, that would result in biased results about what public opinion really is.

ATTACHMENT 3

Advance Letter

<DATE>
John Smith
123 Main Street
Anywhere, USA 12345

Dear <Name>

We need your help to learn what the public thinks about protecting Steller sea lions. The population of Steller sea lions has been rapidly declining. The federal government is considering what more, if anything, to do to protect them. We want to consider your opinions, along with information from scientists and planners, when deciding what do.

In the next few days, you will receive a survey in the mail, with pictures and questions about seals and sea lions. It should be answered by either the male or female head of household. The survey does not require any special knowledge.

Even though you may not be familiar with this issue, your opinion matters. Any government actions to protect Steller sea lions will affect all U.S. households through federal government spending. Your household is part of a small number of household across the country scientifically selected to help. To keep costs low and to make sure we hear from a true cross-section of households, we need to hear from you.

This survey is being conducted by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, a U.S. government agency charged with making decisions about Steller sea lion management activities.

Thank you in advance for your help.

Sincerely,

Dan Lew
Project Director
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Letter with First Mailing of Survey

<DATE>

John Smith
123 Main Street
Anywhere, USA 12345

Dear <Name>

Enclosed is the questionnaire I wrote to you about last week.

We need your help to learn what the public thinks about protecting Steller sea lions. The population of Steller sea lions has been rapidly declining. The federal government is considering what more, if anything, to do to protect them.

Even though you may not be familiar with this issue, your opinion matters. Any government actions to protect Steller sea lions will affect all U.S. households through federal government spending. Although your participation is voluntary, your household is one of only a select few from across the country scientifically selected to provide opinions to be considered along with information from scientists and planners. To keep costs low and to make sure we hear from a true cross-section of the public, we need to hear from you.

Your questionnaire should be completed by either the male or female head of your household. The survey takes most people about 20 minutes to complete, sometimes more, sometimes less. The survey does not require any special knowledge – we just ask that you consider each question and respond with your own opinion.

Your answers will be kept confidential, and your name will never be revealed. Information from the survey will only be reported in statistical terms, and all material identifying you will be destroyed at the end of the study. The identification number on the back of the survey is there so that PA Consulting, a survey firm hired to assist us, can check your name off when the questionnaire is returned. If you have any questions, please call <name> at PA Consulting toll-free at 1-800-xxx-xxxx.

We realize your time is valuable, so we have included $x as a small token of our appreciation for your participation. In addition, when the results are fully analyzed we will send you a postcard listing a web site where you can review a summary of the results. We expect to have results in the fall of 2005.

Thank you for your help, and please remember to complete all the questions.

Sincerely,

Dan Lew
Project Director
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Reminder Postcard

<DATE>

Last week a questionnaire was mailed to you seeking your opinions about what more, if anything, should be done to protect Steller Sea lions, a threatened and endangered species.

If you have already completed and returned the questionnaire, please accept our sincere thanks. If you have not completed and returned the survey, we ask that you do so today.

It is very important that we hear from you. You are one of a small number of households across the country selected to give your opinions on these matters. Your response will help shape decisions about federal government actions and spending on this topic. However, a high rate of participation is required to include public opinion from the questionnaire in these decisions.

If you need another copy of the questionnaire, please call PA Consulting, a survey firmed hired to assist us, at 1-800-xxx-xxxx and a questionnaire will be mailed to you today.

Thank you for your help.

Dan Lew
Project Director
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

discussion of sensitive budget and planning information that would cause harm to third parties if publicly shared be closed in accordance with section 10(d) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. app. 2.

Dated: February 19, 2004.

Arden L. Bement, Jr.,

Director.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[I.D. 021804B]

Proposed Information Collection; Comment Request; Steller Sea Lion Protection Pilot Economic Survey

AGENCY: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Commerce, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on proposed and/or continuing information collections, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Public Law 104–13 (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)).

DATES: Written comments must be submitted on or before April 26, 2004.

ADDRESSES: Direct all written comments to Diana Hynek, Departmental Paperwork Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 6625, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20230 (or via the Internet at *dHynek@doc.gov*).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information should be directed to Dr. Dan Lew, National Marine Fisheries Service, Alaska Fisheries Science Center, 7600 Sand Point Way NE, Seattle, WA 98115; telephone: (206) 526–4252; fax: (206) 526–6723; e-mail: *dan.lew@noaa.gov*.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) plans to conduct a pilot survey with the objective of testing a survey instrument that will be used to collect data for measuring the preferences that U.S. residents have toward protecting the Steller sea lion (Eumetopias jubatus), which is a listed species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 35). NMFS is charged with protecting this species and has identified numerous potential protection options, and begun implementing selected options, to this end (68 FR 204). Since different management options are available to protect Steller sea lions, it is important to understand the public's attitudes toward the variety of potential impacts on Steller sea lions, Alaskan fisheries and fishing communities, and the nation. This information is currently not available, yet is crucial to ensure the efficient management of Alaskan fisheries and protection of Steller sea lions.

The pilot survey instrument will present the latest information on Steller sea lions, current population trends, alternative management options, and likely impacts of management options. The survey is expected to ask respondents for information regarding their knowledge and opinions of Steller sea lions, other endangered species, Alaska fisheries and communities, and potential goals and impacts of management options available to protect the endangered population of Steller sea lions, in addition to standard socio-demographic information needed to classify respondents. The pilot pre-test will gather a sufficient number of responses to evaluate the information presentation, reliability, internal consistency, response variability, and other properties of a newly developed survey. Results from these activities will be used to make improvements to the survey instrument.

II. Method of Collection

Since the data collected in the pilot pre-test is not intended to be used to generate national estimates, non-probability sampling methods will be employed to select a sample that is sufficiently diverse for the purposes of providing a range of feedback on the survey instrument. It is anticipated that the pilot survey will be given to approximately 130 voluntary respondents recruited by telephone in 3–4 areas of the continental U.S. and Alaska. Telephone recruitment calls are expected to be brief, lasting up to about 3 minutes each. Individuals who agree to participate in the pilot pre-test will be asked to meet with survey administrators at a nearby central survey administration location where they will self-administer the survey and participate in a one-on-one follow-up debriefing. This debriefing involves a survey administrator asking a set of questions about the survey to elicit feedback about key design and conceptual components of the survey instrument. Respondents will be given an honorarium for participating in the pilot pre-test activities.

Up to 1,300 recruitment phone calls are anticipated to be made to recruit the 130 participants. At 3 minutes apiece, this amounts to 65 hours. The survey is expected to take approximately 25 minutes to complete, while the debriefing will be about 15 additional minutes, for a total of about 40 minutes or 0.67 hours for the entire process. Thus, we estimate the total respondent time burden to be 151.67 hours (rounded to 152) (130 participants multiplied by 0.67 hours plus the time for recruitment calls).

III. Data

OMB Number: None.

Form Number: None.

Type of Review: Regular submission.

Affected Public: Individuals or households.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 1,300 in recruitment; 130 in pilot pre-test activities.

Estimated Time Per Response: 3 minutes per recruitment; 40 minutes for pilot pre-test activities.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 152.

Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public: $0.

IV. Request for Comments

Comments are invited on: (a) whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden (including hours and cost) of the proposed collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for OMB approval of this information collection; they also will become a matter of public record.

Dated: February 18, 2004.

Gwellnar Banks,

Management Analyst, Office of the Chief Information Officer.

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